

ROY OF THE ROVERS

ANNUAL **1983**



TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR FOOTBALL!

ROY OF

1983 ANNUAL 1983

Hi, soccer fans! Welcome to our 1983 edition, full of the very best stories, action and features. If we haven't managed to include your particular favourites, then look out for ROY OF THE ROVERS weekly in your newsagents! In the meantime, enjoy our latest Annual!



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THE ROVERS

1983 ANNUAL 1983 CONTENTS 1983 ANNUAL 1983

ROY OF THE ROVERS.	4	NO-MAN'S LAND.	58
SUPER COLOUR PHOTOS	12	MORE COLOUR PHOTOS	65
MIKE'S MINI MEN.	17	DURRELLS PALACE	97
INTERNATIONALS ON PARADE.	33	WHO...WHAT AND WHERE?	104
THE HARD MAN	38	ROY'S WONDER CURE	108
ROY'S TALK-IN.	44	ROY'S QUIZ	113
TOMMY'S TROUBLES.	49	PROFILE ON MELCHESTER ROVERS	118
SPOTLIGHT ON ROY RACE.	56	MIGHTY MOUSE	120



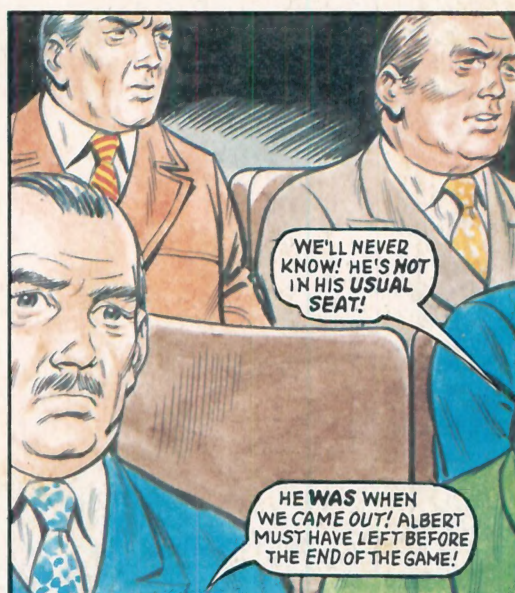
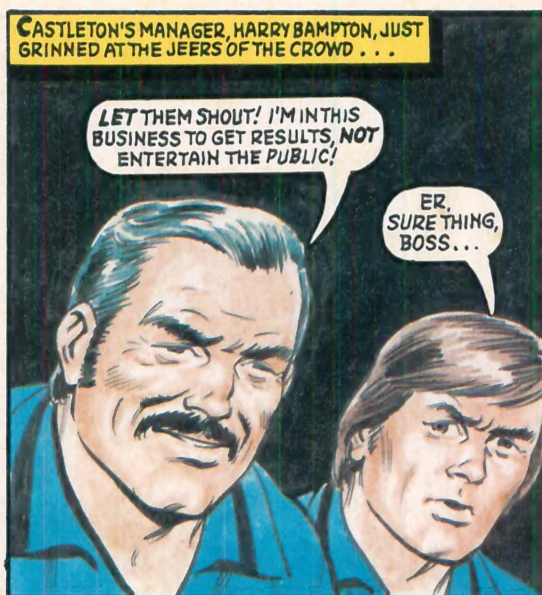
It looks a long way away! In fact, a lot of clubs never get there! Two who did reach Wembley were Manchester City (blue strip) and Tottenham Hotspur. This super panoramic view of the world's most famous stadium gives you some idea of what it's like to tread the hallowed turf. In the meantime, carry on dreaming!

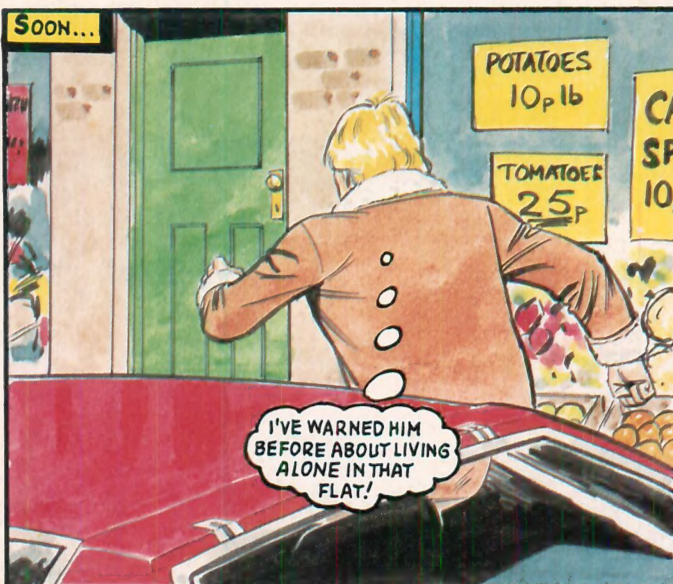
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ROY OF THE ROVERS





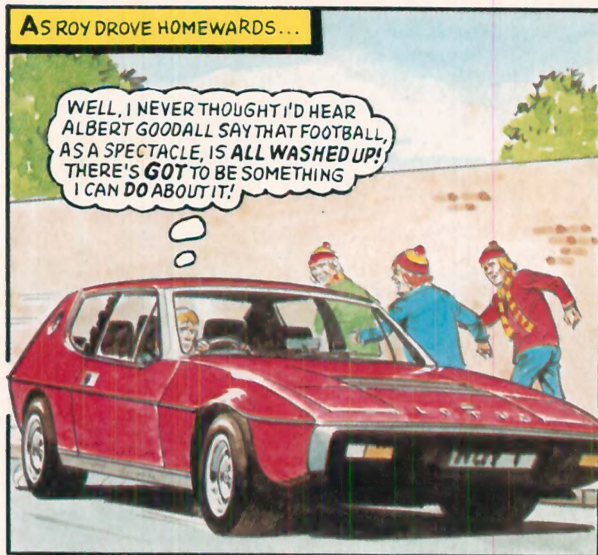
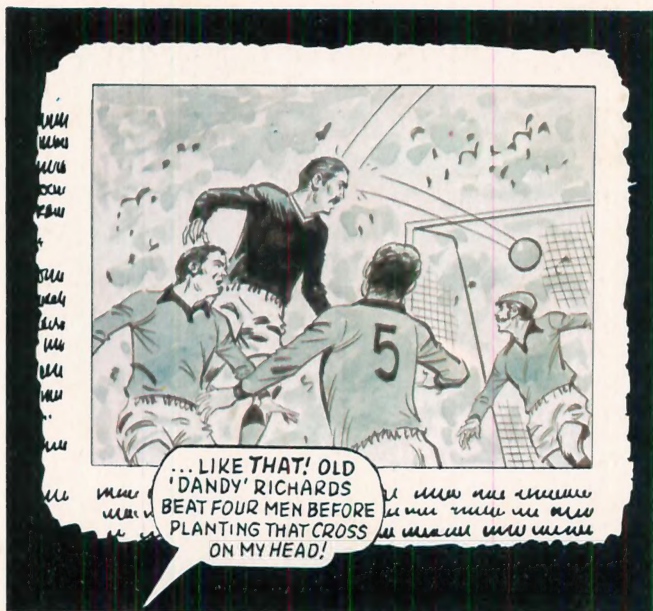


AS THE OLD MELCHESTER STAR MADE ROY A CUP OF TEA...



THE WALLS OF ALBERT'S FLAT WERE COVERED WITH MOMENTOES OF HIS LONG AND PROUD CAREER...





THE INTERVIEW WAS PUBLISHED IN THE NATIONAL PRESS
... AND AT ROVERS' NEXT TRAINING SESSION ...



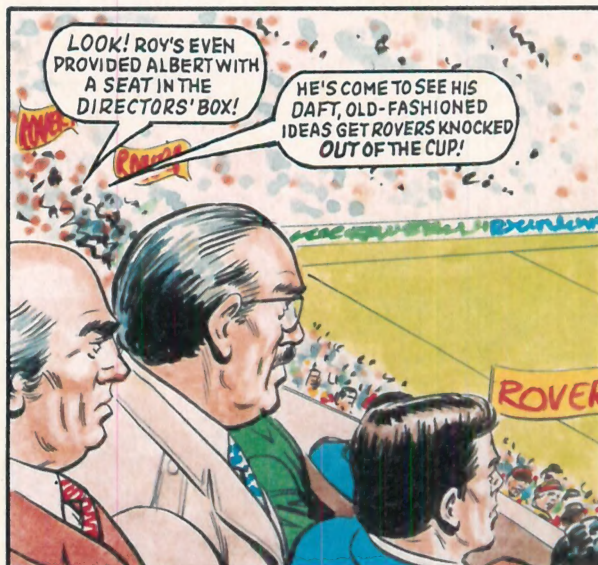
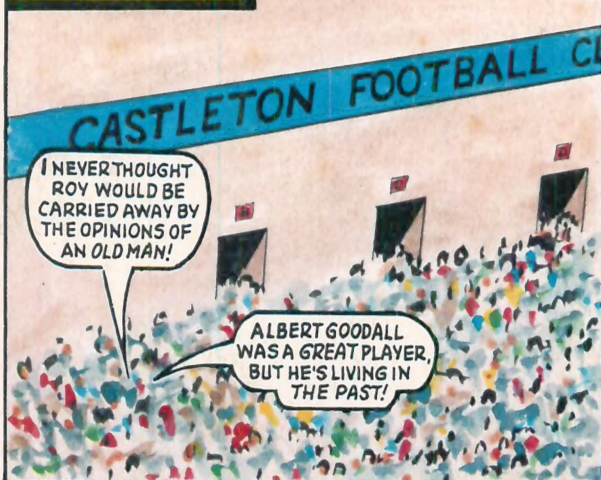
SAM BARLOW WAS THE MELCHESTER CHAIRMAN...



SOME OF THE ROVERS WERE UNEASY...



THE MELCHESTER FANS WERE SAYING MUCH THE SAME THING AS THEY CROWDED INTO CASTLETON'S STADIUM, THE FOLLOWING EVENING...



IN THE CASTLETON DRESSING-ROOM...



RACE IS MAKING THIS GAME EASIER FOR US THAN I THOUGHT, LADS! IF HE'S GOING TO ATTACK, THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF OPENINGS IN THE MELCHESTER DEFENCE FOR US TO EXPLOIT...

... WE'LL HIT THEM FOR SIX BEFORE THEY REALISE WHAT DAY IT IS!



HALF-AN-HOUR LATER, AS THE GAME GOT UNDER WAY...



THEY'VE WORKED IT OUT TO PACO DIAZ!

NOW WE'LL SEE IF RACE MEANT WHAT HE SAID ABOUT LETTING THE ROVERS DO THEIR OWN THING!



YES - THERE HE GOES - SHOWING OFF!

THE SPANISH SUPERSTAR IS ASKING FOR TROUBLE!

SURE ENOUGH...



WAHOOOOO! DIAZ TRIED ONE TRICK TOO MANY!

THOMPSON'S AWAY!

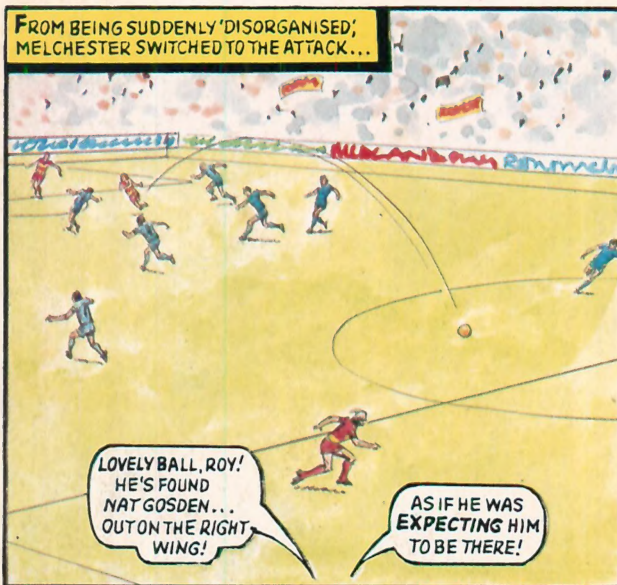
MELCHESTER SEEMED COMPLETELY DISORGANISED AS CASTLETON MOUNTED A SEVEN-MAN ATTACK...

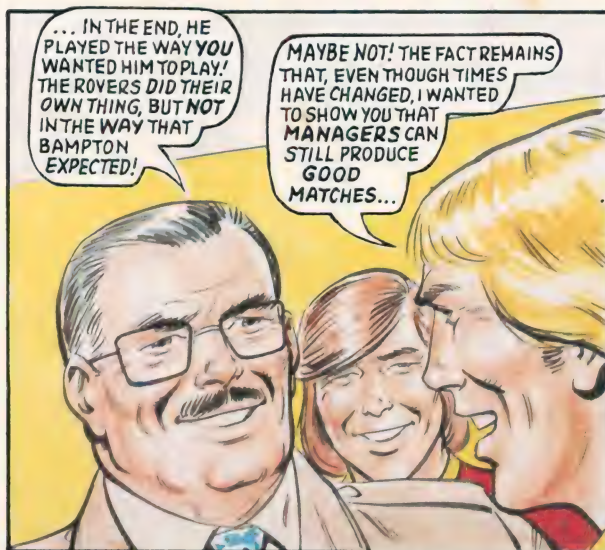
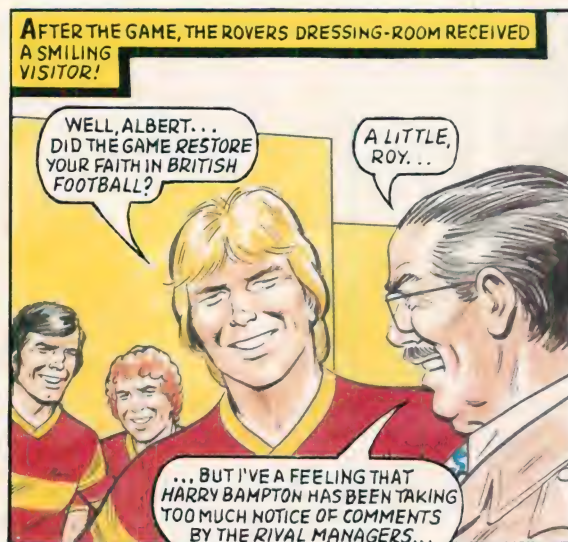
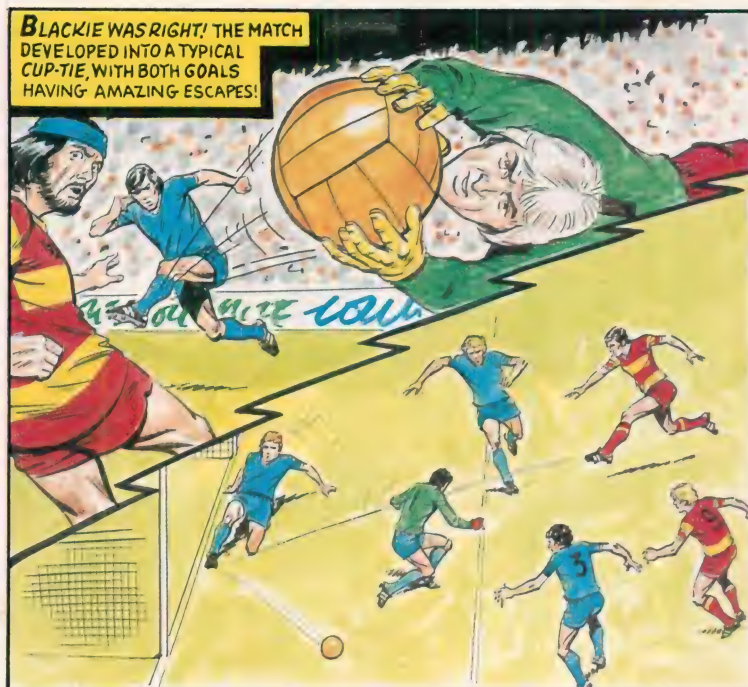


WHERE'S 'GRANDAD' GOSDEN?

'DOING HIS OWN THING', I EXPECT! THE MELCHESTER MIDFIELD IS WIDE OPEN!

CASTLETON ARE PILING FORWARD!





GO...

**There's a wolf at the door!
It's Andy Gray, who wanted
to break into the Aston Villa
defence to plunder goals to
satisfy his appetite! The goal
hungry Scot feeds on any
rearguard weaknesses he
can exploit. Andy's handy,
all right, but he is a loner.
You never see this
Wanderer hunting in a pack!**

STOP!

A soccer player with curly brown hair, wearing a maroon jersey with blue sleeves and a blue armband, is shown in profile. He has his right arm raised high with his index and middle fingers extended, signaling 'stop'. The background is a blurred stadium crowd.

Hold it! Someone's trying to break down our back-four and beat the goal-keeper. He looks like he's after the back of our net! Aston Villa defender, Allan Evans, signals to his men that danger lurks, so they'd better be on their toes. One mistake against this guy and they'll be left howling!

'ROBBO' ON THE RAMPAGE!



Playing for Nottingham Forest against Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane, a typical, left-sided touchline move by John Robertson takes him past an opponent. John's deft footwork, darting runs and accurate centres made him a name at Forest, and with Scotland.

AYLOTT, OF BLUES!



Surrounded by the Blues is not much fun! The blues can get you down! But Barnsley's Trevor Aylott (red shirt) keeps battling away appearing, in this picture, to be waging a one-man assault against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge.



CELTIC'S DARLING!

Every once in a while a gifted goal-grabber comes along and sets people talking. Celtic's Charlie Nicholas is one! This young Scot has become the envy of a multitude of clubs, but the trophy winning Celts will stick to the star who's the Pride of Parkhead.



MIKE'S MINI MEN




ABOUT A DOZEN OF US HAVE FORMED A LEAGUE. WE PLAY AGAINST EACH OTHER A FEW TIMES EACH SEASON...



... AND WE END UP WITH A SIDE THAT'S TOP OF THE LEAGUE, JUST LIKE REAL FOOTBALL!



SOUNDS SUPER!

I'M PLAYING A LEAGUE MATCH AT MY HOUSE TONIGHT... COME ALONG AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO MEET SOME OF THE OTHER PLAYERS.

AND SO, THAT EVENING...



MIKE HAD HIS FIRST SET BOUGHT HIM FOR CHRISTMAS. HE WANTS TO JOIN OUR LEAGUE...

IT'S A SHAME, BUT HE'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE START OF NEXT SEASON. ALL THE FIXTURES ARE WORKED OUT FOR THIS CAMPAIGN...

CHEER UP... I KNOW THE NEW SEASON'S A LONG TIME AWAY... BUT IT WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO PRACTISE... AFTER ALL, WE'RE GOOD! WE'VE BEEN PLAYING A LONG TIME!



MIKE HAD TO BE A SPECTATOR FOR THE REST OF LAST SEASON, BUT HE PLAYED WITH HIS MINI-TEAM WHENEVER HE COULD... AND HE PICKED UP IDEAS FROM WATCHING THE OTHER PLAYERS...



IT'S THERE!... THAT MAKES ME THREE-NIL IN THE LEAD!

HE'S GOOD... BUT I'M SURE REDSTONE ROVERS CAN BEAT HIS TEAM!

NOW IT WAS THE START OF A NEW SEASON AND MIKE WAS ALL READY TO TAKE HIS PLACE IN THE MINI-LEAGUE. THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE HELD A SPECIAL MEETING...



RIGHT, THEN, WE'VE GOT TWO NEW MEMBERS THIS SEASON... MIKE DAILEY AND LOFTY MASON. WE THINK IT'S ONLY RIGHT THAT THEY SHOULD PLAY EACH OTHER IN THE FIRST GAME...

... WHICH WE'VE ARRANGED FOR TOMORROW NIGHT AT LOFTY MASON'S HOUSE!

THAT'S OKAY BY ME. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO MY FIRST GAME...

HUH! MY TEAM, SCARFIELD UNITED, WILL PROBABLY RUN UP DOUBLE FIGURES, THEY'RE THE GREATEST!



AFTER THE MEETING...



CHEERIO, JOHN!

I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW! I'M GOING TO REFEREE THE GAME. SOME OF THE OTHERS WILL BE THERE, TOO...

BUT AS MIKE TURNED THE CORNER...



COME HERE, YOU LITTLE CREEP!

AARGH!

LISTEN... AND LISTEN GOOD!

... YOU MAKE SURE YOU LET ME WIN TOMORROW'S MATCH! IF YOU DON'T, YOU'RE GOING TO GET HURT... I'LL MAKE SURE OF THAT!





L-LOFTY MASON! I... I DIDN'T KNOW YOU CAME TO THIS SCHOOL!

IT'S NOT YOUR BUSINESS TO KNOW! ANYWAY, IT'S MY FIRST DAY!



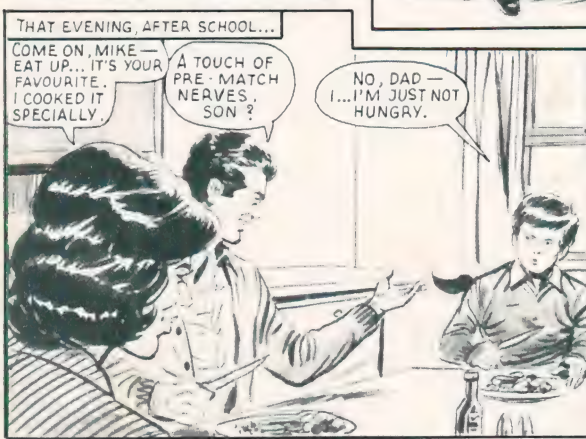
THIS IS JUST TO REMIND YOU ABOUT TONIGHT, DAILEY! IN FACT, YOU MIGHT AS WELL NOT TURN UP!

AARGH...



THAT KID NEEDS TEACHING A LESSON! ARE YOU OKAY, MIKE?

JUST ABOUT! HE'S A GREAT BULLY!



THAT EVENING, AFTER SCHOOL...

COME ON, MIKE — EAT UP... IT'S YOUR FAVOURITE. I COOKED IT SPECIALLY.

A TOUCH OF PRE-MATCH NERVES, SON?

NO, DAD — I... I'M JUST NOT HUNGRY.



WELL, I'D BETTER BE OFF. I DON'T WANT TO BE LATE FOR MY FIRST MATCH.

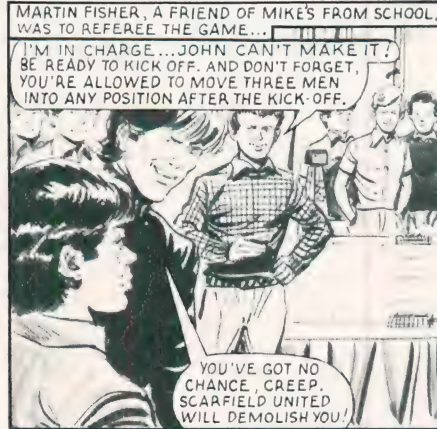
GOOD LUCK! DON'T FORGET, ATTACK'S THE BEST FORM OF DEFENCE!



MIKE ARRIVED AT LOFTY'S HOUSE...

HELLO, SHORTY — BROUGHT YOUR LOSER'S MEDAL WITH YOU?

NO, LOFTY. JUST MY TEAM — REDSTONE ROVERS!



MARTIN FISHER, A FRIEND OF MIKE'S FROM SCHOOL, WAS TO REFEREE THE GAME...

I'M IN CHARGE... JOHN CAN'T MAKE IT! BE READY TO KICK OFF. AND DON'T FORGET, YOU'RE ALLOWED TO MOVE THREE MEN INTO ANY POSITION AFTER THE KICK-OFF.

YOU'VE GOT NO CHANCE, CREEP. SCARFIELD UNITED WILL DEMOLISH YOU!



MIKE KICKED OFF...

RIGHT, I'LL JUST MOVE MY THREE MEN...

I'M SO NERVOUS, MY HANDS ARE SHAKING!



BUT FOR A SPLIT-SECOND, MIKE FORGOT HIS NERVES...

IT'S ALL SET UP! THIS'LL BE NUMBER ONE!

OH, GREAT PASS, MIKE! THAT COMPLETELY SPLIT HIS DEFENCE... YOU MUST SCORE!

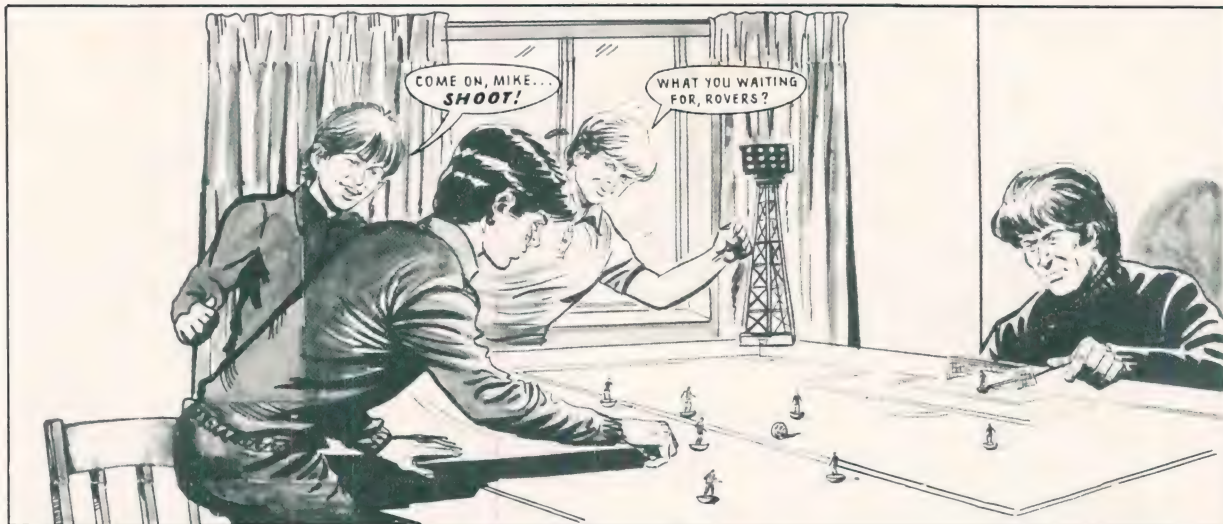


BUT MIKE SUDDENLY FROZE AS HE CAME FACE TO FACE WITH LOFTY...

LET'S HAVE A GOAL!

IF I SCORE, LOFTY WILL REALLY SORT ME OUT! BUT I'M HERE TO WIN THIS GAME... I DON'T WANT TO BE A LOSER! WHAT DO I DO?

COME ON, MIKE — STICK IT IN!



THE MATCH WAS WELL INTO THE SECOND-HALF WHEN MIKE WON A CORNER-KICK.

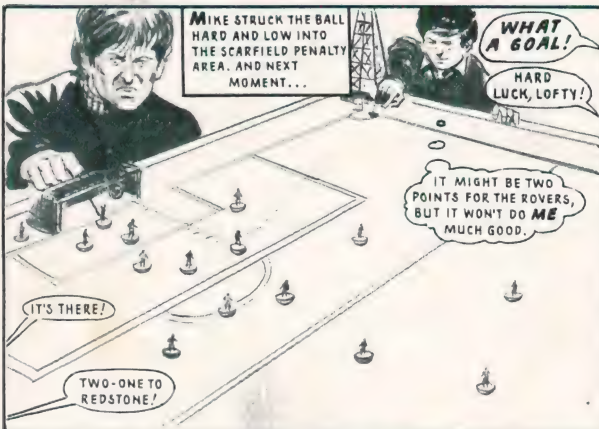


COME ON, REF—HAS YOUR WATCH STOPPED? IT **MUST** BE TIME!

PLAY ON...THERE'S JUST TIME TO TAKE THE CORNER.



I HAVEN'T ENOUGH TIME TO SEND THE BALL TO A TEAM-MATE AND THEN TRY A SHOT. I'D BETTER GO FOR A REBOUND STRAIGHT FROM THIS KICK—THERE ARE ENOUGH PLAYERS CROWDING THE PENALTY AREA!



MIKE STRUCK THE BALL HARD AND LOW INTO THE SCARFIELD PENALTY AREA. AND NEXT MOMENT...

WHAT A GOAL!

HARD LUCK, LOFTY!

IT MIGHT BE TWO POINTS FOR THE ROVERS, BUT IT WON'T DO ME MUCH GOOD.

IT'S THERE!

TWO-ONE TO REDSTONE!



SECONDS LATER, MARTIN FISHER, THE REFEREE, BROUGHT THE GAME TO A CLOSE...

WELL DONE, MIKE—YOU'VE WON YOUR FIRST GAME.

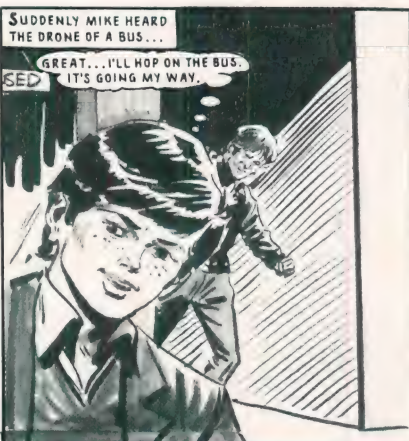
BUT I WAS A BIT LUCKY, WASN'T I?

YOU'RE DEAD RIGHT, SONNY, BUT WHEN I GET YOU OUTSIDE... YOUR LUCK IS GOING TO CHANGE... FOR THE WORSE!



MIKE MADE HIS WAY HOME...

LOFTY MUST BE LURKING AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.



SUDDENLY MIKE HEARD THE DRONE OF A BUS...

GREAT...I'LL HOP ON THE BUS. IT'S GOING MY WAY.



BUT BEFORE MIKE COULD TAKE ANOTHER STEP!

OKAY, CREEP. YOU'VE BEEN ASKING FOR AGGRO...NOW YOU'RE GOING TO GET IT!



MIKE'S PALS WERE NOT FAR AWAY...

IT LOOKS AS IF MIKE'S IN A BIT OF BOTHER!

WE'D BETTER GO AND GIVE HIM A HAND. THAT LOFTY MASON NEEDS SORTING OUT!

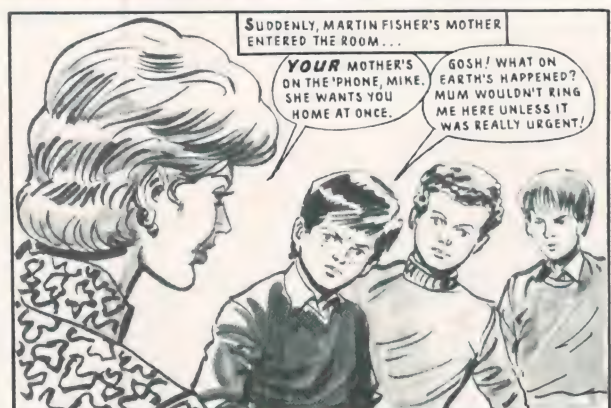
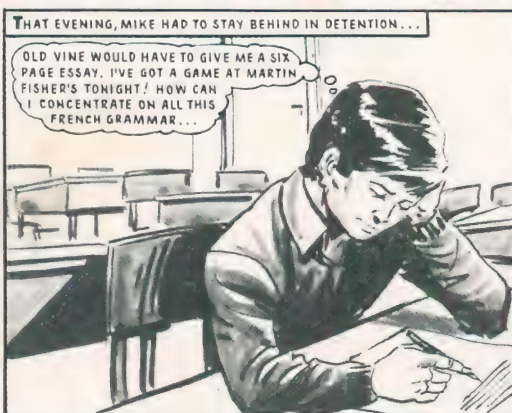
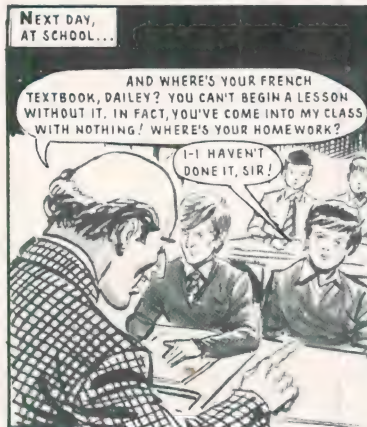


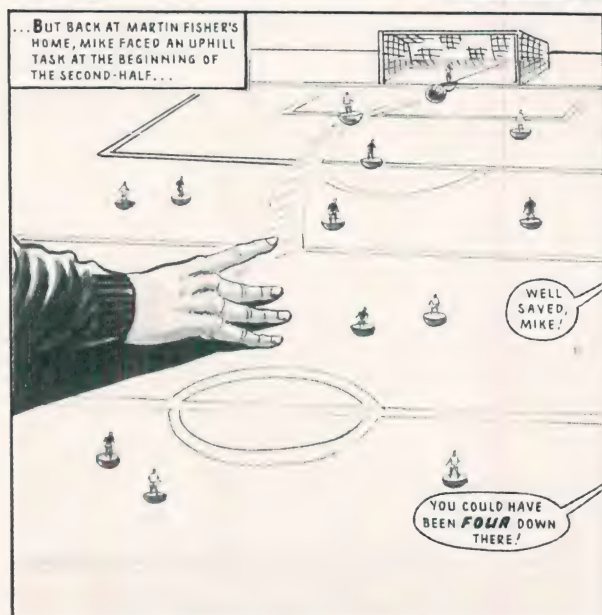
LOFTY WASN'T STAYING AROUND!

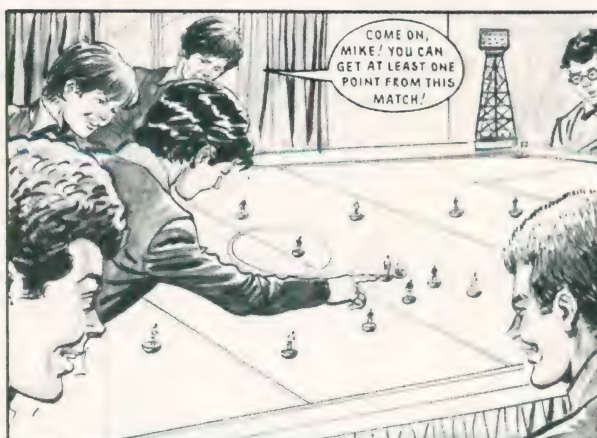
THIS IS WHERE I SPLIT, DAILEY! BE SEEING YOU!

HEY, THAT'S MY FOOTBALL TEAM YOU'VE GRABBED! COME BACK, YOU ROTTEN THIEF!





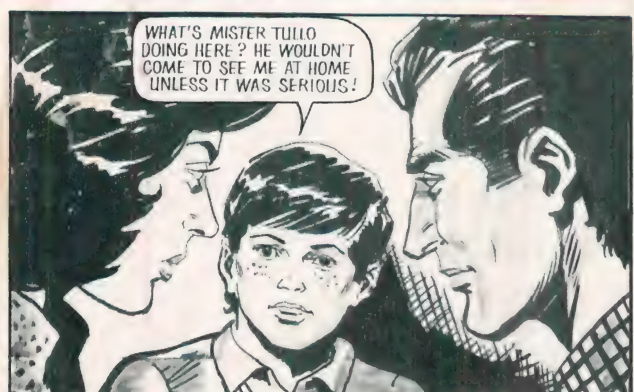




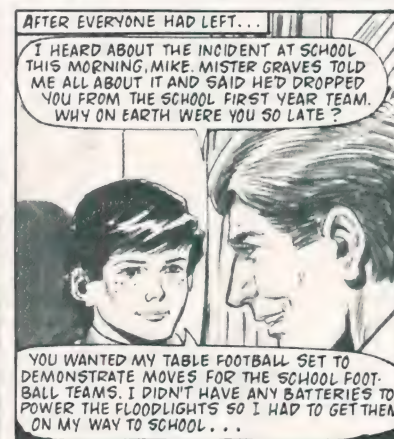


MIKE ARRIVED AT SCHOOL IN HIGH SPIRITS!









ACTION EXTRA!

Ipswich Town v Sunderland

Brazil beaten? It's not very often! On this occasion, though, it's Ipswich Town striker, Alan Brazil. Mind you he's a difficult man to dispossess. Sunderland defenders, Rob Hindmarch (left) and Jeff Clarke, just manage to stop him in the nick of time. Coming to the aid of his teammates is Iain Munro.



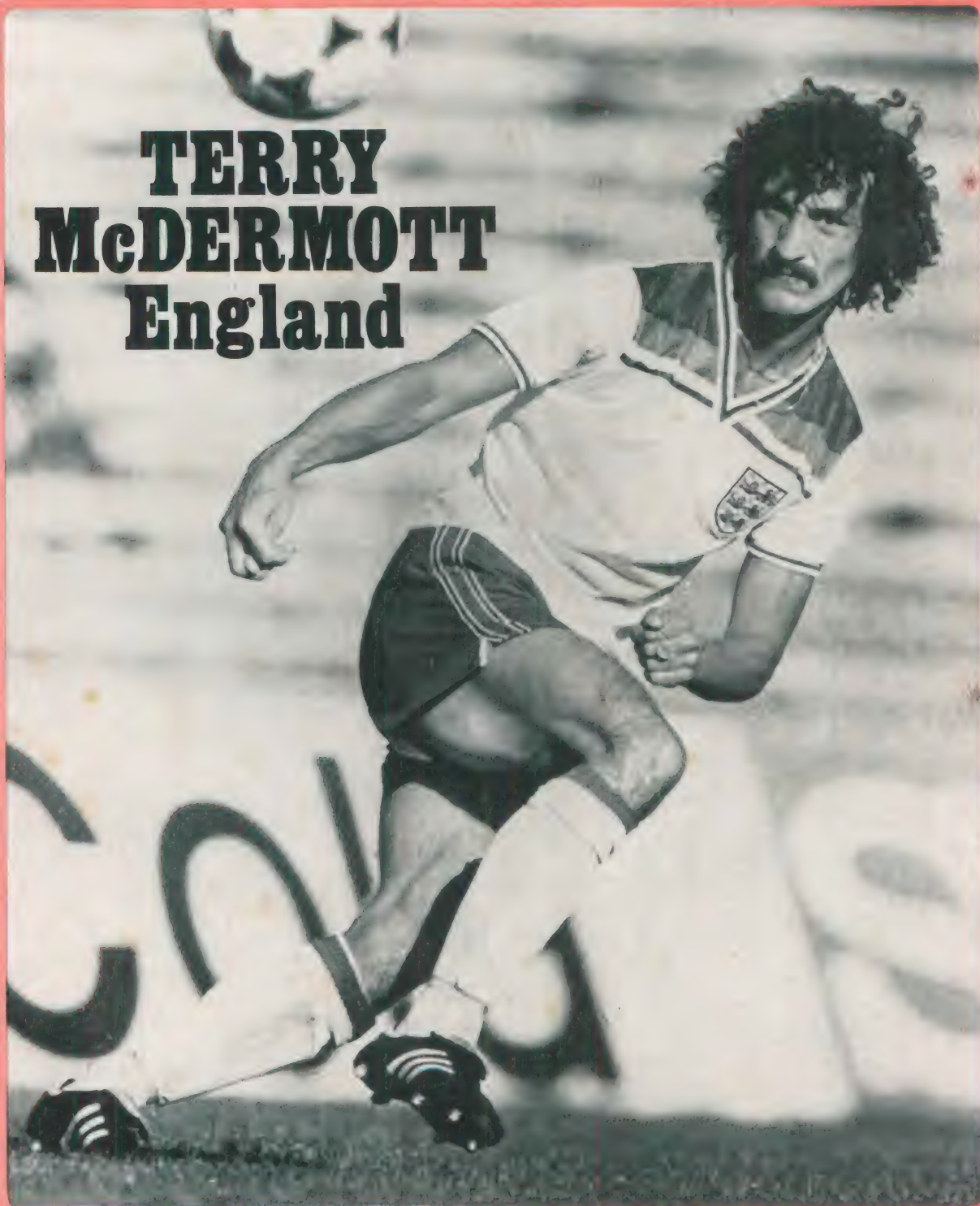
FAMOUS FOOTBALL FUNNIES!

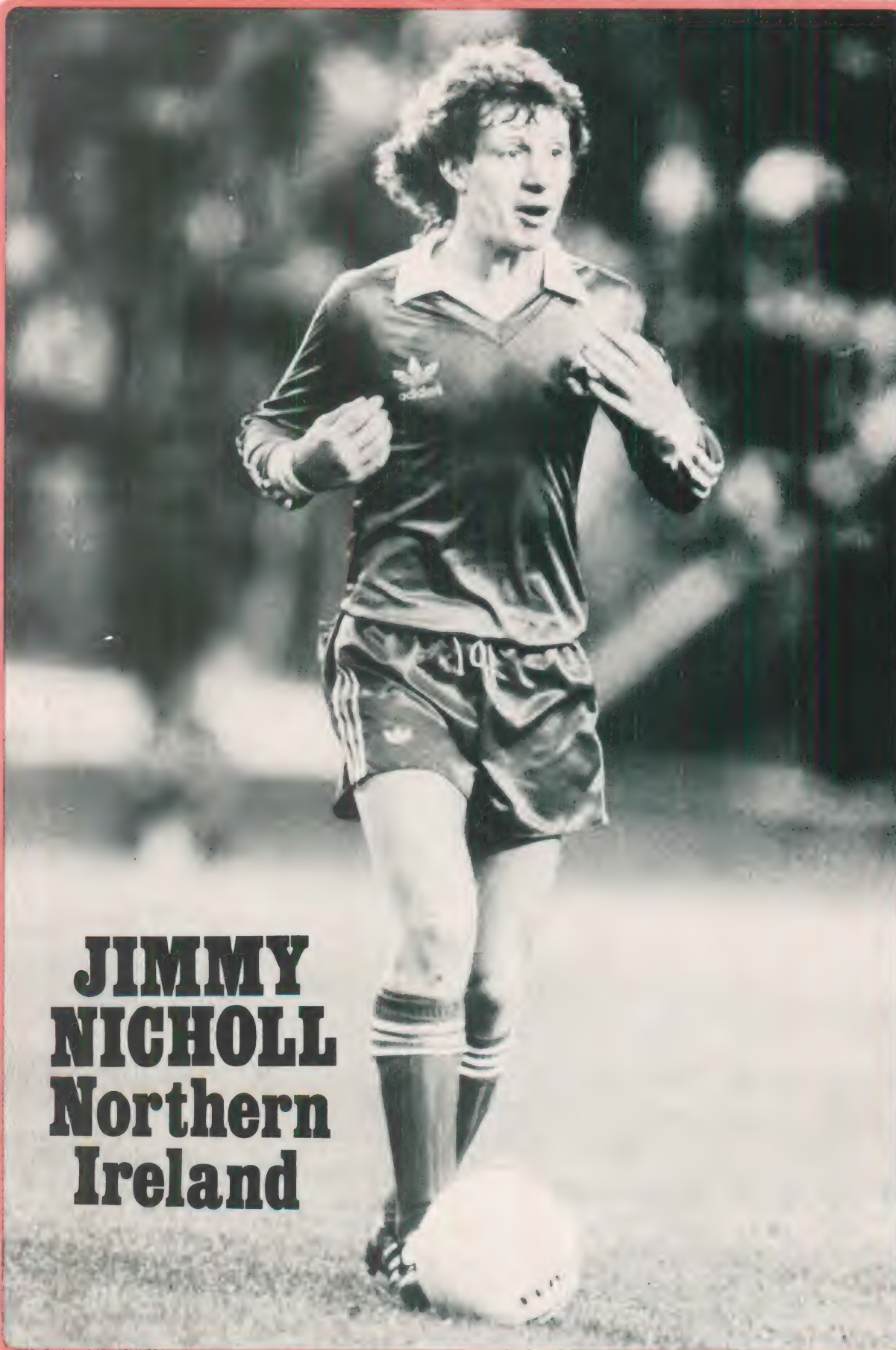


INTERNATIONALS ON PARADE

The United Kingdom and Republic Of Ireland are represented over the next few pages by players who have become automatic choices for their countries.

**TERRY
McDERMOTT**
England





**JIMMY
NICHOLL**
Northern
Ireland

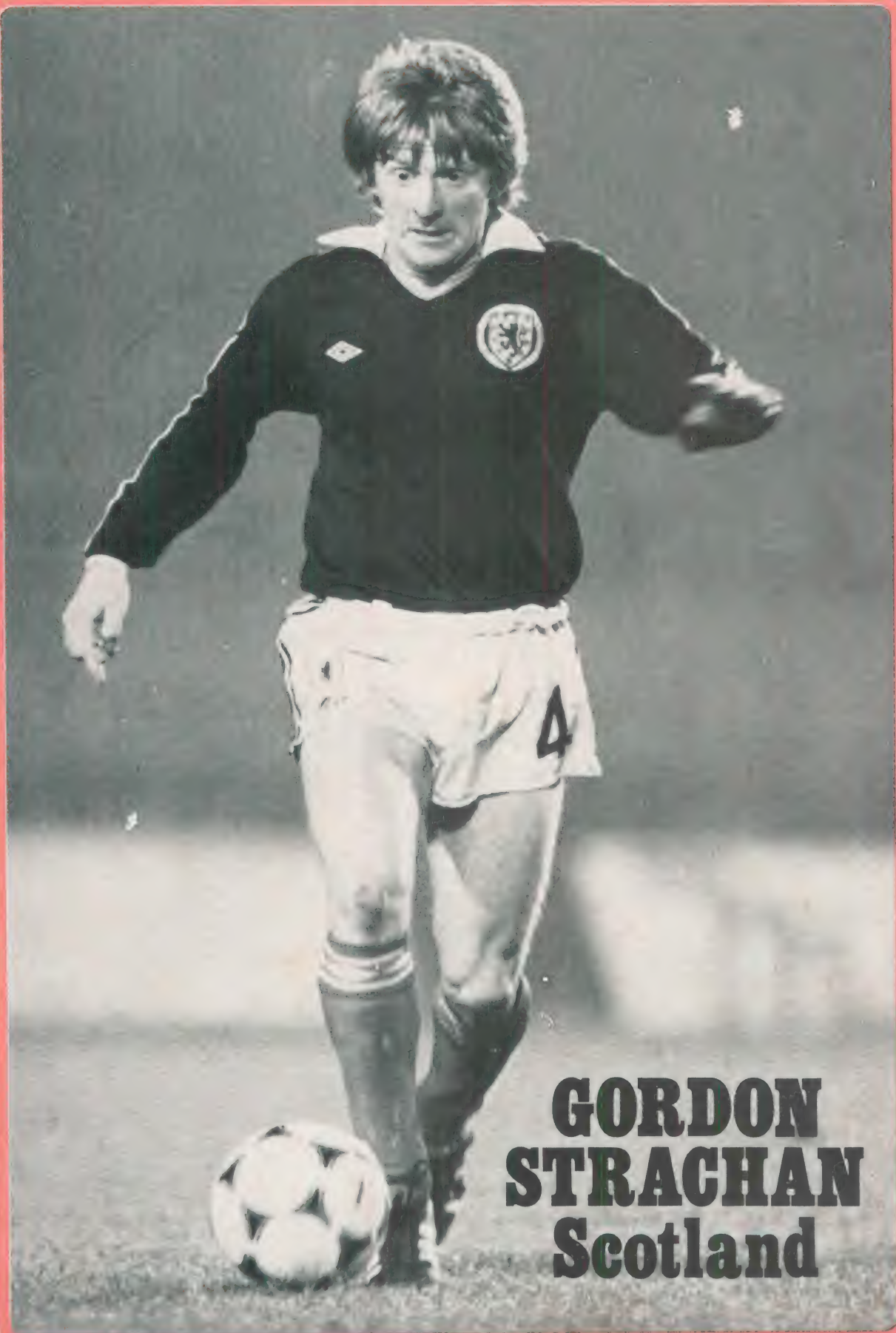
**DAVID
LANGAN**
Republic
of Ireland



IAN WALSH

Wales





**GORDON
STRACHAN**
Scotland



THE HARD MAN



DANEFIELD UNITED WERE A FIRST DIVISION CLUB, CAPTAINED BY JOHNNY DEXTER, KNOWN AS THE HARD MAN. EACH CHRISTMAS, THE CLUB HELD A FANCY DRESS PARTY.



ALL THE FIRST-TEAM SQUAD WERE THERE, INCLUDING...

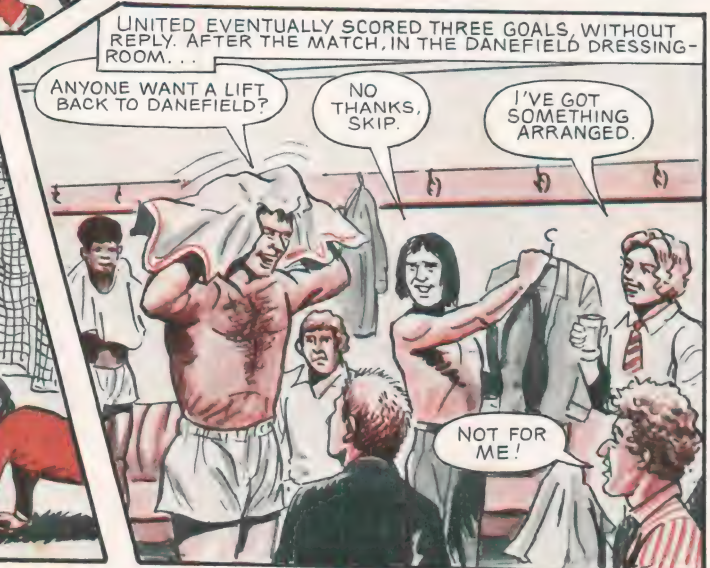


KEVIN TAYLOR AS FATHER CHRISTMAS, DANNY CHURCHILL AS A PIRATE AND BOB BAKER AS ONE OF THE UGLY SISTERS.

BUT THE SENSATION OF THE PARTY WAS JOHNNY DEXTER ... AS COUNT DRACULA!







AND THEN...



SUDDENLY!



IN THE DARKNESS, JOHNNY DID NOT SEE A DITCH...



NEXT MOMENT, THE FIGURE OF COUNT DRACULA WAS TOWERING OVER THE DANEFIELD CAPTAIN...



SUDDENLY THE NIGHT WAS FILLED WITH LAUGHTER!



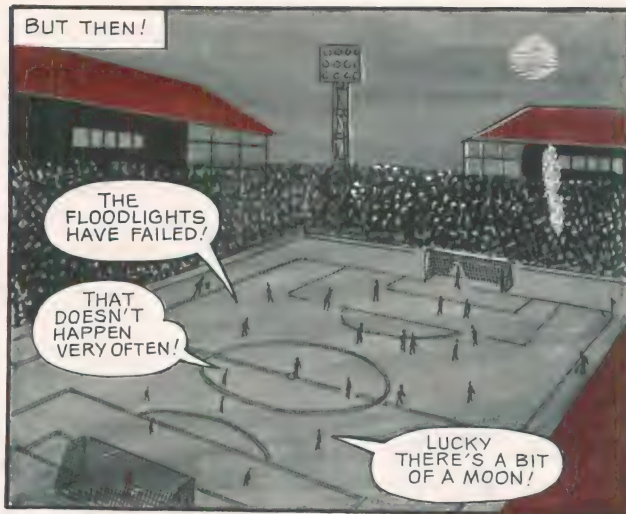
DANEFIELD'S SECOND LEG GAME AGAINST POTTERTON WAS THE FOLLOWING WEEK...



IN MIDFIELD, UNITED WERE COMPLETELY ON TOP...



BUT THEN!



THE FLOODLIGHTS HAVE FAILED!

THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN VERY OFTEN!

LUCKY THERE'S A BIT OF A MOON!

THEN IT HAPPENED!



J-JOHNNY... LOOK! COUNT DRACULA!

OH, NO... NOT AGAIN!

THE EERIE FIGURE GLIDED AWAY INTO THE DARKNESS...



DON'T YOU GUYS EVER GIVE UP?

B-BUT, SKIPPER, IT WAS NOTHING TO DO WITH US. IT... IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE REAL COUNT DRACULA!

UNSEEN, THE COUNT ENTERED THE PLAYERS' TUNNEL...



SUDDENLY A MASK WAS TAKEN OFF... TO REVEAL THE FAMILIAR FACE OF... DANEFIELD BOSS, VIKTOR BOSKOVIC!



SORRY, READERS... I JUST COULDN'T RESIST IT!

THE END

» THE ROY



Transfer fees have reached ridiculous proportions! Players are now being bought and sold for grossly inflated fees. Few would grace the Hall of Fame. Ordinary performers are fetching sums far in excess of their talents . . . or limitations. Certain managers preach about no player being worth a million p pounds and in the next move go out and buy one exceeding that amount!

The costliest player at Melchester Rovers is striker, Paco Diaz. He cost me £750,000 from Spanish club Real Varagoza. But, as you've seen, he's been worth it. And that surely is the most important factor at stake. Is a player worth the transfer money involved?

With currency being "thrown about" on the soccer front in Britain as though it's the richest country in the world(!), it prompted me to look at how transfers have spiralled over the years . . . how long it's taken inflation to get out of hand.

It's as long ago as 1906 when the first four-figure transfer took place. February of that year saw forward Alf Common move from Sunderland to Middlesbrough for exactly £1,000. At the time, there was almost a public uproar. People were astonished that a mere footballer could cost such a vast sum of money. Nowadays that sum wouldn't buy an average performer's small toe!

The rate of progress (some people

wouldn't call it that!) was slow in those days, though. It was another 16 years before the £5,000 mark was reached. Sid Puddefoot left West Ham United for Scottish club Falkirk for that sum.

Everyone, especially fans of the game, were speculating about whether the £10,000 mark would ever be reached. It took another six years. Then, one of the greatest goalscorers of all time, a Scotsman named Hughie Gallacher, moved from Newcastle United to Chelsea, in soccer's first-ever five-figure deal.

Hughie was much loved by the fans. It was ironic that he should eventually die in tragic circumstances . . . a lonely and forgotten man.

SHUTDOWN

A year before the Second World War broke out (1938), the transfer market had reached £14,000. That fee was for a Welsh international named Bryn Jones, who joined Arsenal from Wolves.

The war came and went . . . six years before our game returned to its old format. And despite the six-year shutdown of fixtures as we know them today, it was getting increasingly dearer to buy players. In 1947, the £20,000 mark was reached. It cost Notts County that to buy the great England centre-forward, Tommy Lawton, from Chelsea.

The talk was then about the possibility of double this amount being paid out. Sure enough, it came, but it was to be another 12 years (1959) before a player cost that much. The honour went to Mel Charles, who like his famous brother, John, could play either in defence or attack. Arsenal were the buyers . . . Swansea Town (as they were known then) the sellers.

The £50,000 transfer was inevitable. It came in 1960 and was

actually £55,000. The player involved was worth every penny. Still to realise his amazing potential, it was Denis Law . . . destined to become one of the game's greatest and most famous goalscorers. Manchester City were the big spenders . . . Huddersfield Town the grateful receivers.

Deadly Denis was to become England's most expensive signing two



**HUGHIE
GALLACHER**

RACE TALK-IN!

years later. By that time he was playing for the Italian club, Torino. Desperately unhappy, and wanting to return home, Manchester United pounced and for what was then a colossal amount (£116,000 . . . Britain's first six-figure transfer) they got their man.

The blond-haired Scot was to prove one of the most fabulous performers United and Scotland will ever see.

His razor-sharp reflexes inside the penalty-area earned him countless goals. Will we ever see his like again in British football?

In 1966, Alex Stepney became the costliest 'keeper at that time, Manchester United again being involved. They forked out £55,000 to Chelsea to secure his services . . . after only *ONE* first-team game for the Stamford Bridge club! Stepney was Matt Busby's last piece of his jigsaw to complete a side capable of realising his dream . . . that the famous Old Trafford outfit should become the first English club to win the European Champions' Cup. They did . . . two years later, when United beat Portuguese aces Benfica at Wembley, 4-1, after extra-time. It was a vital save by Stepney from the famous Eusebio just before the end of normal time

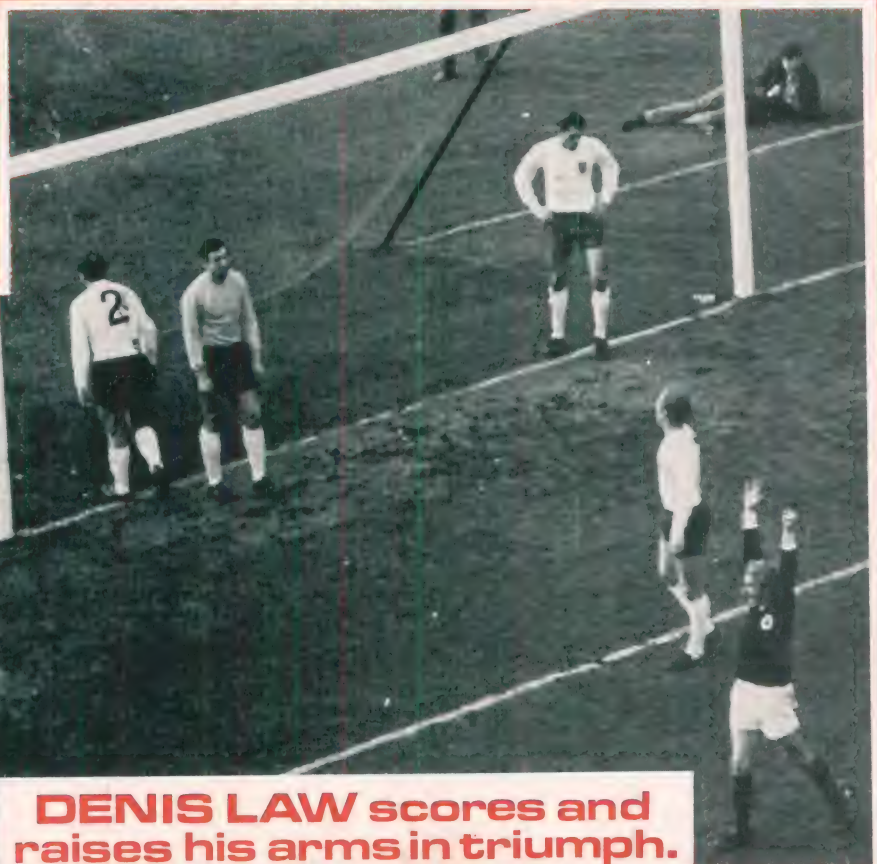
which forced the game into another half-hour. The Mitcham-born 'keeper gave the Red Devils invaluable service.

Six years after Law's move to Manchester United, another renowned striker, Allan Clarke, became the most expensive man in the English League. Fulham pocketed £150,000 when he departed for Leicester City. A year later, an extra £15,000 (£165,000 in all) and Don Revie had grabbed him for an already star-studded Leeds United line-up. And he was still Britain's most expensive footballer!

The beginning of the Seventies saw the first £200,000 transfer. It involved the most famous "ghost" in soccer . . . Martin Peters. He left West Ham United to sign for neighbours, Tottenham Hotspur. Peters had an amazing knack of ghosting in



ALF COMMON



DENIS LAW scores and raises his arms in triumph.



**KEVIN
KEEGAN**



**ALEX
STEPNEY**

on the blindside of opponents to score goals. Sir Alf Ramsey said he was a player ten years ahead of his time. He was to later state that it took him three years to appreciate what Martin was doing.

RESTRICTION

By now, though, the sky seemed to be the limit. The quarter-of-a-million mark came and went. A superb full-back, David Nish, joined Derby County from Leicester City for this figure in August, 1972. Eighteen months later, Bob Latchford cost Everton £350,000 from Birmingham City. Last season, he was "doing his stuff" for newly promoted Swansea City.

Kevin Keegan figured in Britain's first half-a-million move, but it would have been more had Liverpool not sold him to West Germany's SV Hamburg. There's a restriction on fees on the Continent. One of England's greatest ambassadors, Kev had won every honour possible on the

domestic scene. He needed a new challenge and, of course, the money he received connected with his move was a telling factor.

The initial £500,000 transfer (some sources reveal it as £495,000) between English clubs took place in February, 1978, when Gordon McQueen swapped a Leeds United shirt for Manchester United's colours.

Transfer fees were now seemingly getting out of all proportion. It was hard to determine just how much a player was costing a club, and with value-added tax added, it became difficult to establish correct transfer fees.

Just one year after McQueen's move (February, 1979), Trevor Francis became Britain's first million pound footballer. After much speculation, the former "superboy" of Birmingham City was snapped up by Brian Clough of Nottingham Forest for a reported £1,150,000. He repaid a large slice of that sum by scoring Forest's only goal in the European Champions' Cup Final against Malmö of Sweden in Munich... the only bright spot in an otherwise dull advertisement for Europe's greatest club prize. And Francis became the Football League's first star to be involved in another straight million

pound move when a stated £1,200,000 took him from Forest to Manchester City in September, 1981.

In the meantime, the "king" of the transfer market had become Scottish international striker, Andy Gray. In September, 1979, he took the short trip from Villa Park, home of Aston Villa, to link up with Wolverhampton Wanderers. The cost? A new British record of £1,469,000!

STAGGERING

During the same month, the flamboyant Malcolm Allison, then in charge at Manchester City, paid a staggering £1,450,000 for Wolves' midfield ace, Steve Daley. In fact, it was Daley's departure that virtually financed Gray's move to Molineux. But, Allison's brashness was heavily criticised. After all, he'd paid nearly one-and-a-half-million pounds for a player who has still to win a full cap for his country! Gray repaid some of his huge fee by Winning the 1980 League Cup for the Wanderers.

Back to Big Mal, and another million pound man arrived at Maine Road. The time was March, 1980, and it was goal-grabber



**BRYAN
ROBSON**



TREVOR FRANCIS (centre) heads a winner!



Kevin Reeves from Norwich City. He changed hands for £1,250,000!

Three months later, a similar sum (some newspaper reports had it as only a mere million!) took Clive Allen from Queen's Park Rangers to Arsenal.

Andy Gray's title as Britain's Most Expensive Footballer lasted just over two years. On October 3rd, 1981, the record was broken by West

← DIEGO MARADONA



DUNCAN EDWARDS

Bromwich Albion and England mid-field maestro, Bryan Robson, who followed in the wake of his previous boss, Ron Atkinson, to join up with him again, this time at Old Trafford. The money, presumably including VAT, was a cool one-and-three-quarter-million pounds! Robson's a very good player, though . . . some say the best in Britain! I wasn't exaggerating when I used the word maestro in his case. He's one of the few players to have produced his excellent club form at international level. England can be proud of him. And he can be proud of himself. But £1,750,000? It's open to endless debate.

SCANDAL

Whilst the market had gone mad in England, elsewhere it was even crazier! In Italy, for example, striker, Paulo Rossi, had left unfashionable Vicenza for Juventus. The cost to the Turin giants was in excess of £2,000,000! And his transfer was during a long suspension from the game, owing to involvement in a bribery scandal.



Topping everything, though, was the complicated loan/transfer of Diego Maradona . . . Argentina's wonder player. He moved from Argentina Juniors to Boca Juniors. The fee was, wait for it . . . **FOUR MILLION POUNDS!** Yes, read that again! It's not a misprint. And, as brilliant as he is, I still don't rate him as good as George Best in his heyday!

At the time of writing, there are no plans to limit transfer fees in Britain, but just how high can a manager bid, pay out, and feel fully justified having done so?

In my estimation, to pay a million pounds for a player, he'd have to be exceptionally skilful, exciting to watch, a crowd-puller, a regular international, consistently on-form, and be able to operate in virtually every outfield position. Only one player ever fitted that category . . . Duncan Edwards! And he died tragically when he was only twenty-one!

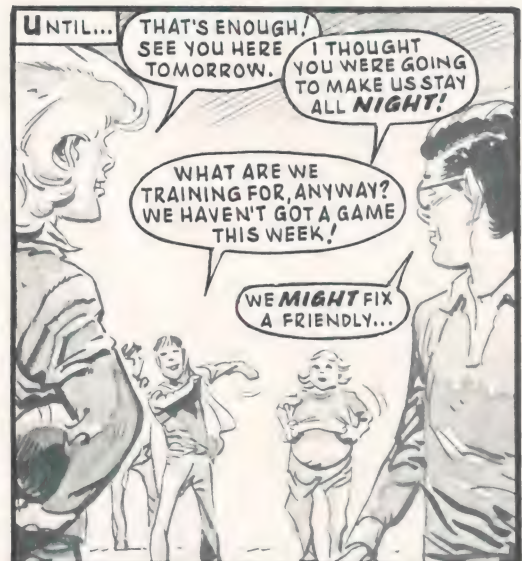
Roy Rose

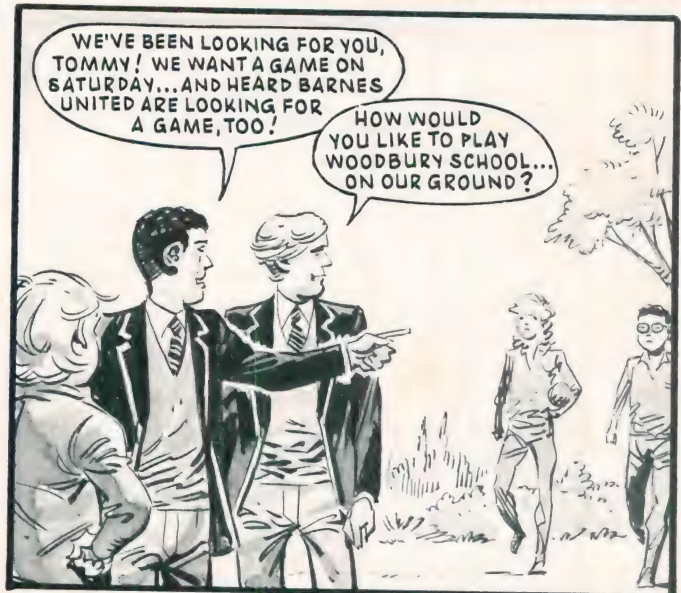
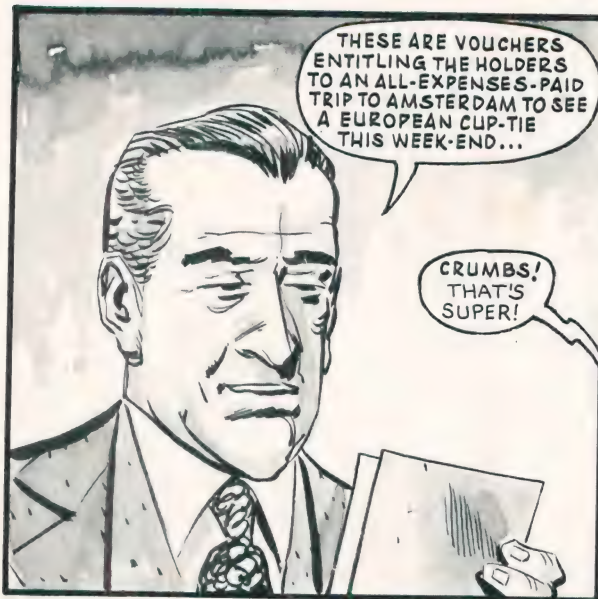
TOMMY'S TROUBLES

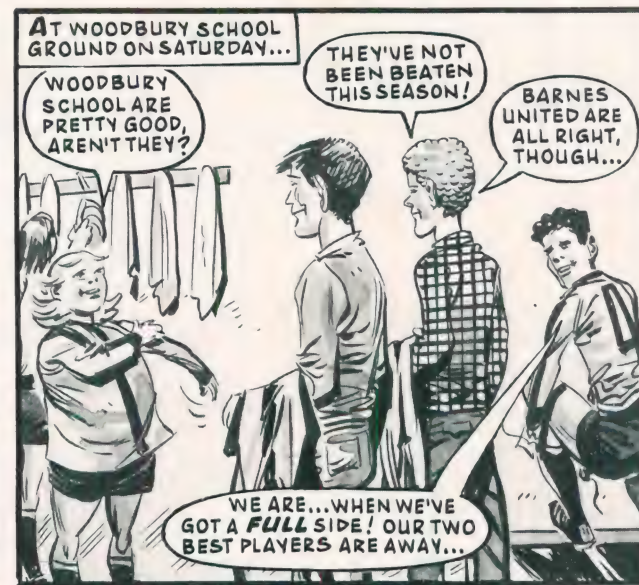
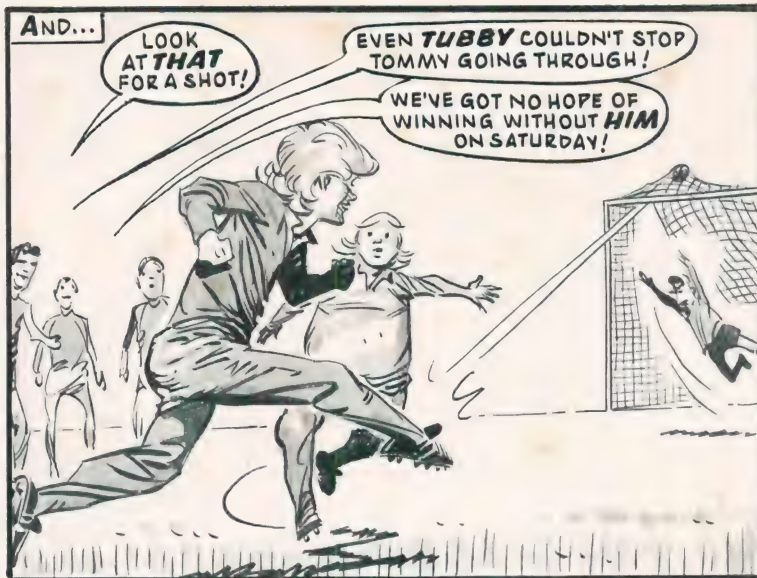
TOMMY BARNES AND HIS PAL, GINGER COLLINS, FORMED THEIR OWN SOCCER TEAM, BARNES UNITED... AND MADE THEIR OWN PITCH FROM DISUSED TENNIS COURTS. TOMMY WAS A FIRM BELIEVER IN KEEPING FIT... AND HE MADE HIS TEAM-MATES TRAIN HARD, TOO...













AHH, WE'RE JUST IN TIME!

TOMMY AND GINGER!



I THOUGHT YOU'D BE IN HOLLAND BY NOW! WHAT HAPPENED?

WE GOT TO THE STATION... AND WERE ON THE PLATFORM WAITING FOR THE TRAIN...

WHEN AN EXPRESS ROARED THROUGH...



IT MADE A WIND LIKE A FLIPPING HURRICANE! AND—AND WE DROPPED OUR TICKETS!



WE'VE LOST THEM! ALL OF THEM!

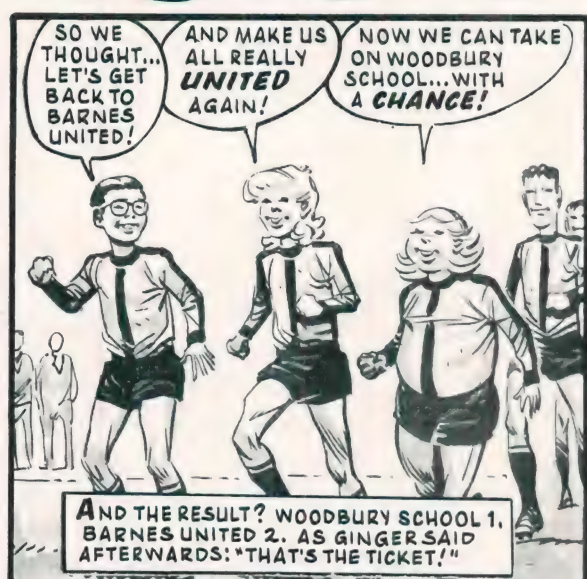
THERE'S NO HOPE OF FINDING THEM...



SO, THOSE TICKETS BLEW IN ON BALLOONS...

AND BLEW AWAY AGAIN... WITH A TRAIN!

HARD LUCK, LADS!



SO WE THOUGHT... LET'S GET BACK TO BARNES UNITED!

AND MAKE US ALL REALLY UNITED AGAIN!

NOW WE CAN TAKE ON WOODBURY SCHOOL... WITH A CHANCE!

AND THE RESULT? WOODBURY SCHOOL 1, BARNES UNITED 2. AS GINGER SAID AFTERWARDS: "THAT'S THE TICKET!"

....ACTION EXTRA!....

RANGERS v ST. MIRREN



Two of Scotland's mid-field-men strive for the ball. They are Saints' Billy Stark (left) and Jim Bett. The action was at Ibrox Park in the Premier League.

SPOTLIGHT ON ROY RACE



Following hundreds of requests to update the spotlight on Rovers' Player-Manager, read all the latest about Roy Race here...

FULL NAME: Roy Race.
BIRTHPLACE: Melchester.
HEIGHT: 6 feet.
WEIGHT: 12 stone
PREVIOUS CLUBS: None (except a set that Arnold Palmer gave me for Christmas).
MARRIED? Yes, to Penny.
CHILDREN: Twins...Roy and Melinda (and another baby on the way at the time of writing).
CAR: Lotus Elite.



FAVOURITE PLAYER: Blackie Gray.
FAVOURITE OTHER TEAM: Melchester Rovers reserves.
MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT: Danefield United's Johnny Dexter.
MOST MEMORABLE MATCH: Any match with Melchester.
BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT: Relegation and my wife's departure to Crete in 1981.
FAVOURITE COUNTRY: Greece (Crete, in particular). My wife told me to say that...
FAVOURITE FOOD: Trifle and smoked salmon...not together!
SELECTED LIKES: Travelling, writing.
SELECTED DISLIKES: Smoking, especially by women; hooliganism.
FAVOURITE ACTORS/ACTRESSES: Paul Newman, Shirley MacLaine.



PAUL NEWMAN

FAVOURITE VOCALISTS: Barbra Streisand, Jack Jones, The Kinks, Cliff Richard.
FAVOURITE TELEVISION SHOWS: All sports programmes, documentaries and comedy shows, especially The Two Ronnies, Mike Yarwood and Stanley Baxter.

BARBRA STREISAND



CLIFF RICHARD

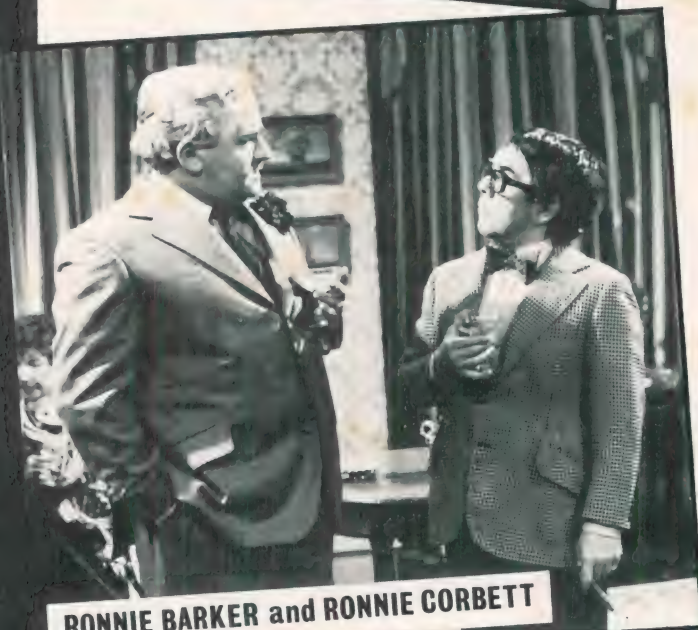


BEST FRIENDS: All readers of my paper.
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER: Ben Galloway, Melchester Rovers' General Manager.



PELE

RONNIE BARKER and RONNIE CORBETT



INTERNATIONAL HONOURS: One or two caps for England...

PERSONAL AMBITION: To remain happy and healthy.

PROFESSIONAL AMBITION: Continued success for Melchester.

IF I WASN'T A SOCCER STAR, WHAT WOULD I BE? A season-ticket holder with Melchester Rovers.

WHICH PERSONALITY WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? Pele.

NO-MAN'S LAND...

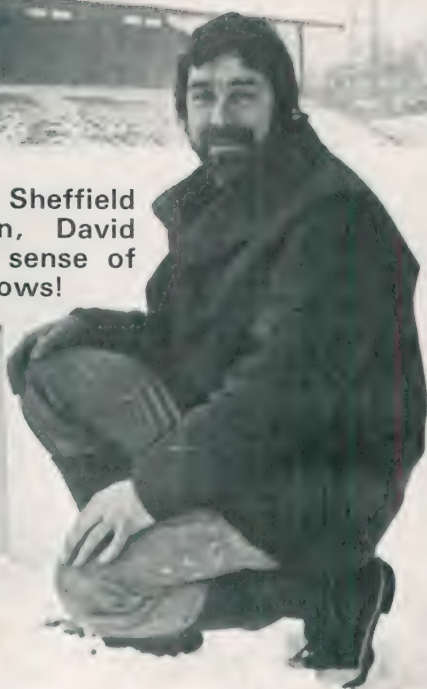


...a land of igloos and icicles and vast white spaces? Not quite, but many a football pitch gave that impression during the hard winter of 1981-82. We open with a shot of Birmingham City's St. Andrews, which like so many other grounds was totally unplayable. The once green playing fields of Britain nearly became known as...

SNOW GO AREAS!

Grass? What grass? Sheffield Wednesday groundsman, David Barber, certainly has a sense of humour as this picture shows!

**KEEP
OFF THE
GRASS**



Still in Yorkshire and these volunteers turned up to clear the pitch at Rotham. Soccer would be lost without fans like these!

Makes 'snow' difference! These two still played! Partick and Kilmarnock revelled in the wintry conditions at Firhill Park.





Arsenal groundsmen had some fun despite their game against Middlesbrough being called off. Mind you, the snowman doesn't look too pleased!



Another one of the few grounds where a match took place, this time at Chesterfield, where the home team took on Huddersfield in the F.A. Cup. Town enjoyed it more...they won one-nil.

Disappointment on the faces of these Charlton fans. It certainly wasn't 'Happy Valley' the day their match was snowed off!





Right, all together, lads! Barnsley's Joe Joyce, Gary Pierce, Ray McHale and Ian Evans take their turns with the shovels. Below: all clear on Queen's Park Rangers' pitch.



Forest beat the freeze! They did a great job at the City Ground so that Nottingham could play Birmingham. Here, Ian Wallace (left) shoots for goal.



There's no holding Oldham! Snow definitely didn't stop play at Boundary Park, although 'Latics' Paul Atkinson had trouble keeping his feet in this tussle with Watford's Pat Rice. Below: Manchester City players also managed to beat the weather.





Above: Forest fans make their own entertainment during the half-time break.



Bristol Rovers' Martin Flook kept his feet in the wintry conditions as he celebrated his appointment as the club's new Chairman!



No luck for Chesterfield this time! Saltergate gets the thumbs down from the referee and no wonder...it's completely frozen!

A couple of potential 'sweepers' in the making! Q.P.R. fans Chris Hibbitt (left) and Steven Pitcher made a clean sweep of Loftus Road and the game v Barnsley was on!



No such luck at Portsmouth's Fratton Park. Commercial Manager Les Allen and Secretary Bill Davis are ankle deep in the white stuff! No 'Pompey Chimes' on this particular Saturday!



Manchester City 'broke the ice' and played against Stoke. Undersoil heating made it all possible!



GREAT GOAL!

He refuses to be penned in! Don Penn strikes for Walsall as he shoots past a despairing, outstretched leg of Fulham's Tony Gale. The match was a Third Division fixture at Craven Cottage which ended 1-1.



FOOTBALLING



Peru

There's no beating the South Americans for sheer colour and spectacle! These pre-match scenes in Lima are vastly different from our own in Britain. The running track is a blaze of colour as balloon sellers like the one above display literally hundreds! There's a mass of red and white everywhere! The Peruvian national flag is paraded (above left) to thunderous applause and then the



FIESTA!




v Uruguay

entertainment really starts! Two immaculately dressed children (left and above right) twirl gracefully to a band playing Latin American music. The young lady gives a stunningly beautiful exhibition which has the crowd on its feet, clapping in time to the beat. And all this even before the match has started! The result of this World Cup Qualifier by the way...nil-nil.



ROB OF THE ROKERITES!

A full-page action photograph of Rob Hindmarch, a footballer, in a light blue jersey and dark blue shorts, kicking a white football. He has curly brown hair and a focused expression. The background is a blurred stadium with other players and spectators.

A tall, well-built defender, Rob Hindmarch made his League debut for Sunderland away to Birmingham City on October 6th, 1979. He was born in Stanington, Northumberland.

A GENTLE LION!



There's nothing like looking smart! Millwall player-manager, Peter Anderson, has a smart-looking outfit down at The Den. The Lions are roaring towards better days!

PEPSI

GOLDEN GOALS

In 1981-82, the Football League and Pepsi-Cola joined forces to boost the English League's goal tally. A £70,000 prize fund was set up, designed as a goalscoring incentive to all players and clubs in the four Divisions. One point was awarded for every home goal and two for away goals. There were also prizes each month for the top scoring clubs and their players. Here are just a few of the winners...

Liverpool are never far away from any honours to be won. The famous Anfield club win a monthly award for October, 1981, being the top scorers in Division One...netting 11 goals in five games. Here, skipper Phil Thompson (right) and manager Bob Paisley (second left) receive a cheque for £1,000.



It's the turn of Third Division Exeter City to win £1,000 for themselves. During the same month as Liverpool were doing their stuff up top, the Grecians were rattling in 17 goals in just seven games! Happy captain John Delves is delighted to receive the award. Manager Brian Godfrey (left) looks on.

Status is no obstacle in this goal-grabbing incentive scheme. Down in Division Four, Bradford City boost their funds. Six matches during September, 1981, produced no less than 18 goals! This time former Burnley star, Billy Ingham, is the proud recipient of a much needed financial boost for the Valley Parade outfit.



A happy Hammer! That's skipper Billy Bonds. During September, 1981, his marauding marvels set the First Division alight. Half-a-dozen matches produced 14 golden goals and Pepsi-Cola had no hesitation in hurrying down to Upton Park to present the club with its well deserved £1,000 prize.

It's the popular young manager of Watford, Graham Taylor (centre). His high-flying Hertfordshire club really established themselves as a force in 1981/82 and the second complete month saw the Hornets buzzing busily to the tune of 13 goals in five games as they blazed a mighty hot trail to the top!



It's a great night for Belfast and Northern Ireland. Gerry Armstrong and Manager Billy Bingham celebrate their country qualifying for the World Cup Finals in Spain.

YER MEN!



Arrest these Villans! Opposing defences would like to put Peter Withe (left) and Tony Morley under lock and key!



ENGLAND'S VILLANS!

SUPER STURROCK!



Much of Dundee United's success in recent years can be attributed to Paul. His goalscoring prowess has helped the Tannadice Terrors to win two consecutive League Cups. He's also a Scottish cap.

CHEESED OFF!



That football's a bit over-inflated! But look again!
The real ball is just clearing the bar, headed there
by Ipswich's Paul Mariner. The reason for the
Dutch cheese advert... Town's opponents were
Alkmaar — of... where else? Holland!

POLEAXED!

A shock for East Germany on their own soil. In a vital World Cup qualifying match they crash 3-2 to Poland. Here Schnuphase, is outnumbered by Poles!



Walker McCall's the tune! Aberdeen star,
Walker McCall (centre), heads in one of the
Dons' two goals v Partick Thistle at Firhill.

**GREAT!
GOAL!**



TOFFS OF THE KOP!

I say! You two-er-toffs in the toppers! You should be at a high-brow gathering! Actually, they prefer more down-to-earth stuff . . . supporting Liverpool in Europe.



HIGHBURY HOSE-DOWN!

That's one way to keep cool! Arsenal stars, David O'Leary (left) and Brian McDermott soak up some pressure from veteran goalie, Pat Jennings.



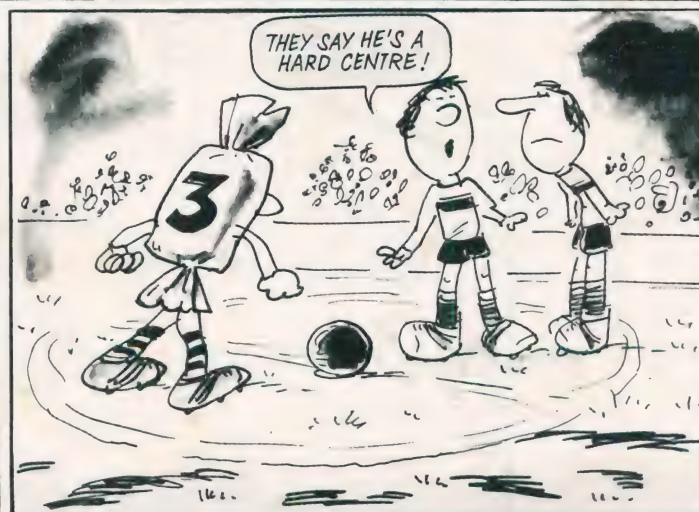
GREAT GOAL!

Action from one of those sizzling, exciting games in 1981/82 that fans won't forget...especially those at St. Andrews. The score was Birmingham 4, Forest 3! Kevin Broadhurst (arm raised) boosts Brum's total.



FAMOUS FOOTBALL FUNNIES!

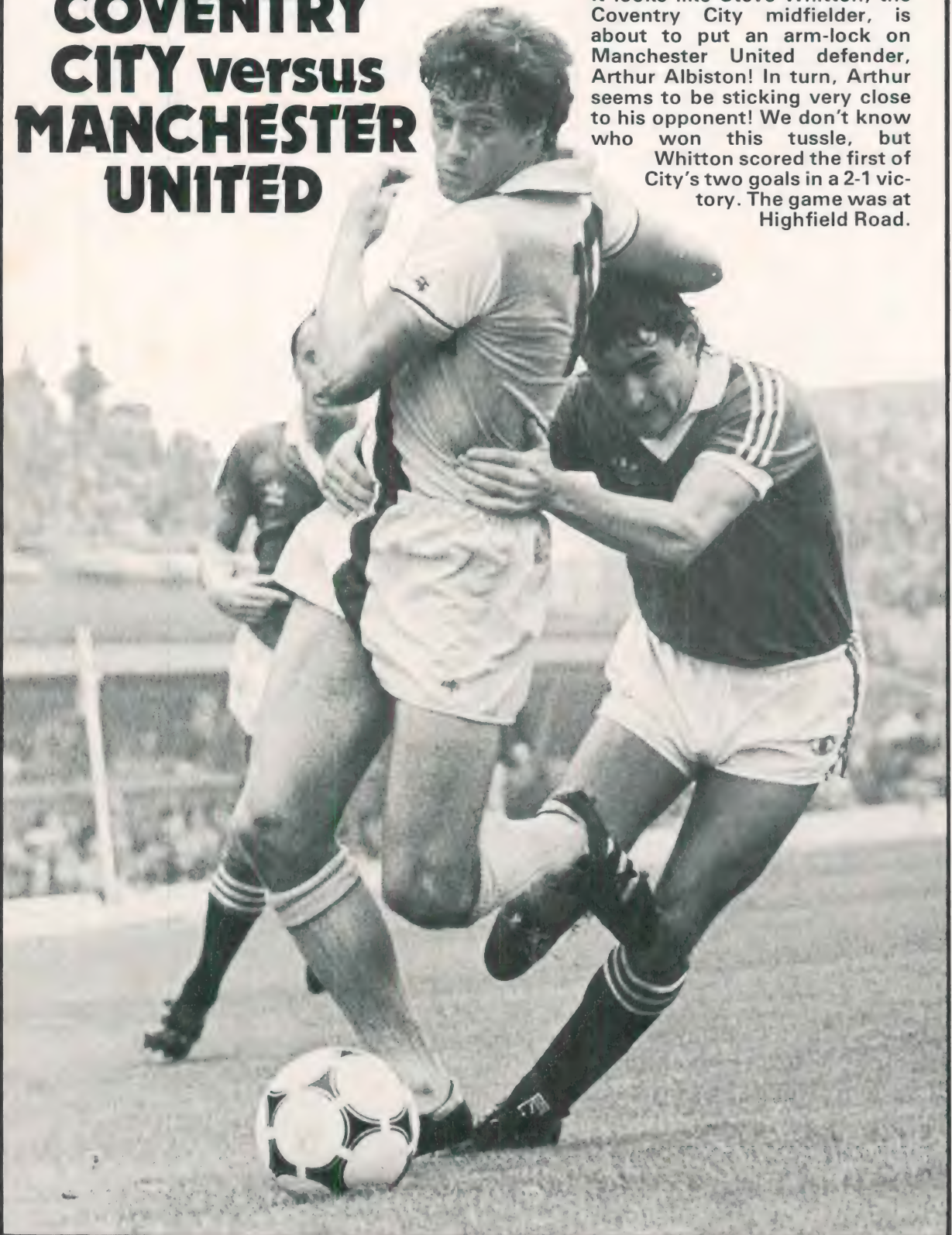
DAVID MYERS



ACTION EXTRA!

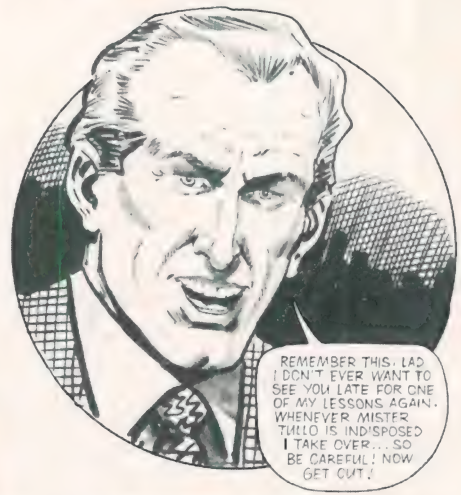
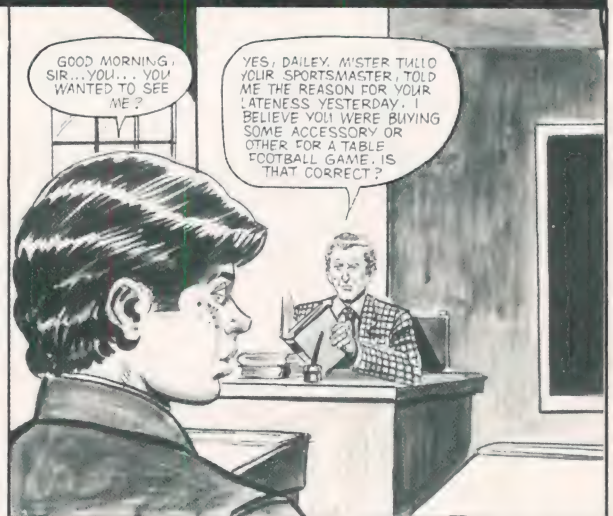
COVENTRY CITY versus MANCHESTER UNITED

It looks like Steve Whitton, the Coventry City midfielder, is about to put an arm-lock on Manchester United defender, Arthur Albiston! In turn, Arthur seems to be sticking very close to his opponent! We don't know who won this tussle, but Whitton scored the first of City's two goals in a 2-1 victory. The game was at Highfield Road.

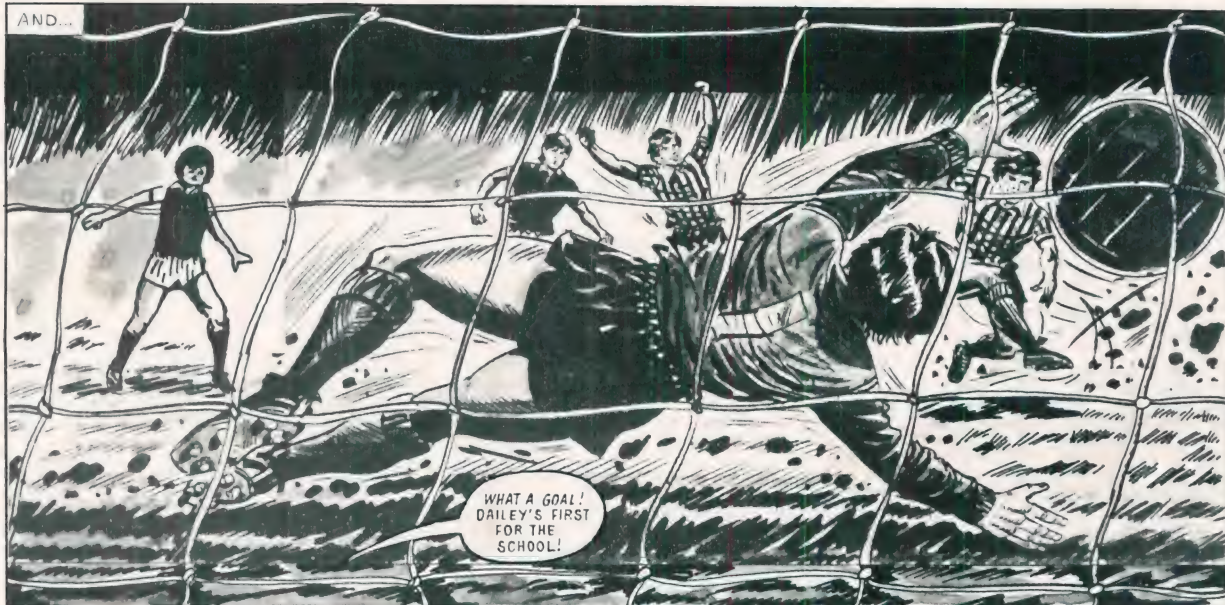


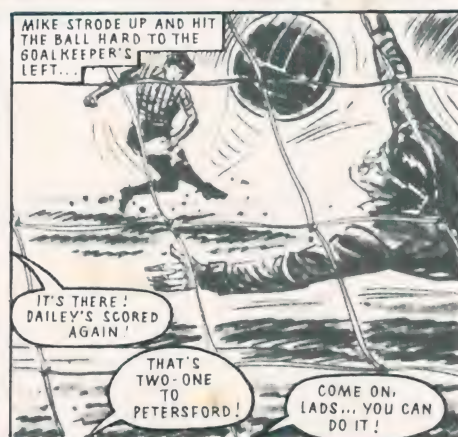
MIKE'S MINI MEN

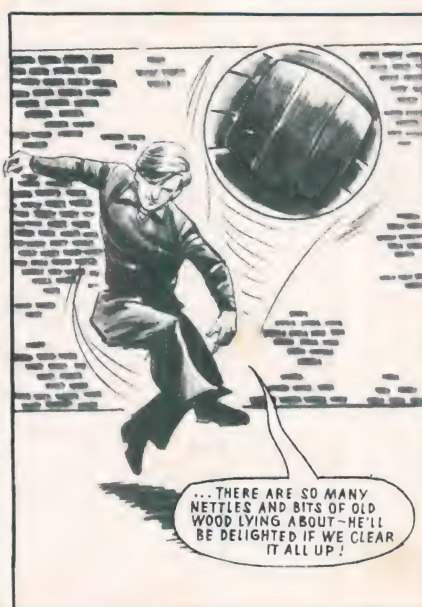
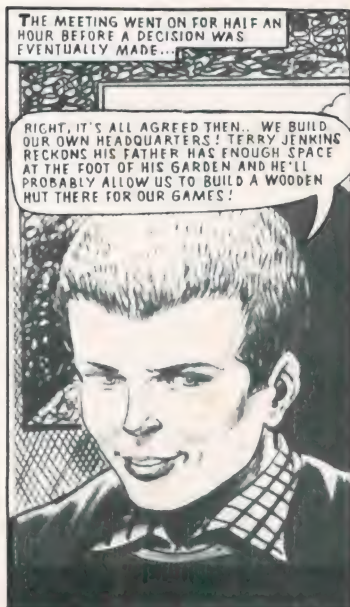
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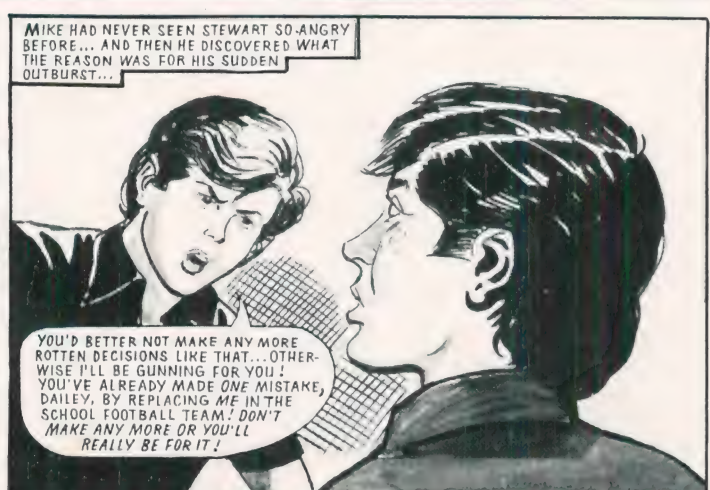
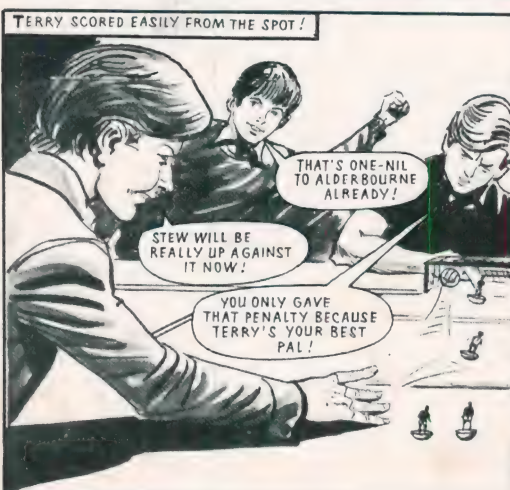




















I'M TERRY'S BEST FRIEND AND I SAW EVERYTHING. I'D BETTER COME ALONG.



FORTUNATELY, TERRY'S PARENTS TOOK THE NEWS CALMLY. AND AT THE HOSPITAL...

HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS, POOR LAD. HE MUST HAVE GOT QUITE A BANG. I'M AFRAID THERE'S NOT MUCH POINT IN YOU STAYING HERE. IF YOU RING THE HOSPITAL LATER TONIGHT, I'LL TELL YOU IF THERE'S BEEN ANY CHANGE. IN THE MEANTIME, TRY NOT TO WORRY. HE'LL BE WELL LOOKED AFTER.

THANK YOU, NURSE... THAT'S VERY KIND.



WHO'S RESPONSIBLE THEN, MIKE?

SOMEBODY MUST HAVE CHOPPED DOWN THAT TREE.



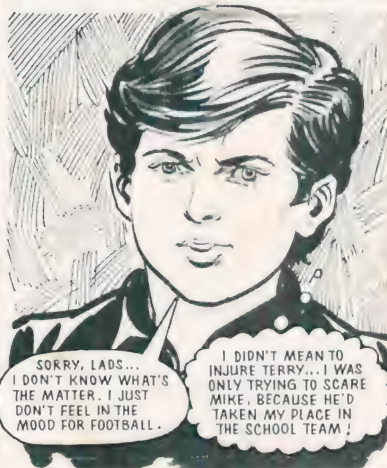
NOBODY KNOWS. IT HAPPENED SO QUICKLY AND IN THE PANIC TO GET AN AMBULANCE, WE HARDLY HAD TIME TO SEARCH FOR THE CULPRIT.



THE CULPRIT WAS STEWART TURNER, WHO HAD A TABLE FOOTBALL MATCH ARRANGED WITH MIKE THAT PARTICULAR EVENING...

ANOTHER GOAL TO REDSTONE ROVERS! IT'S TOO EASY!

I NEVER EXPECTED TO BE THREE-NIL UP... AND IT'S NOT EVEN HALF-TIME YET!



SORRY, LADS... I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S THE MATTER. I JUST DON'T FEEL IN THE MOOD FOR FOOTBALL.

I DIDN'T MEANT TO INJURE TERRY... I WAS ONLY TRYING TO SCARE MIKE, BECAUSE HE'D TAKEN MY PLACE IN THE SCHOOL TEAM!



MIKE SCORED HIS SIXTH GOAL SHORTLY BEFORE THE END...

AN OWN GOAL. STILL, THEY ALL COUNT!

FANTASTIC... SIX NIL! THAT'S THE BIGGEST VICTORY THIS SEASON!



AFTER THE GAME, THE MEMBERS VISITED TERRY JENKINS IN HOSPITAL... EXCEPT STEWART TURNER...

IT'S REALLY GREAT TO SEE YOU ALL HERE! GOSH, I THINK YOU MUST HAVE BROUGHT ME A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF FRUIT!

YOU LOOK PRETTY FIT, TERRY, APART FROM THE BANDAGE ROUND YOUR HEAD. BY THE WAY, WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 'ROY OF THE ROVERS' THIS WEEK?



AH, YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT TILL I'VE FINISHED READING IT, MARTY... IF YOU CAN POSSIBLY WAIT THAT LONG!

OKAY, BUT MAKE SURE I'M FIRST IN THE QUEUE! HEY, YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT MIKE'S SIX-NIL VICTORY IN THE TABLE FOOTBALL LEAGUE TONIGHT, HAVE YOU?



NO, OF COURSE NOT... WHO DID YOU BEAT, MIKE?

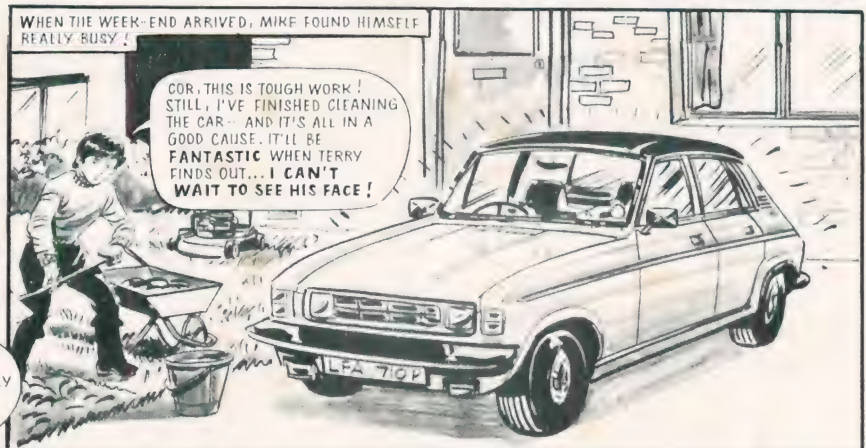
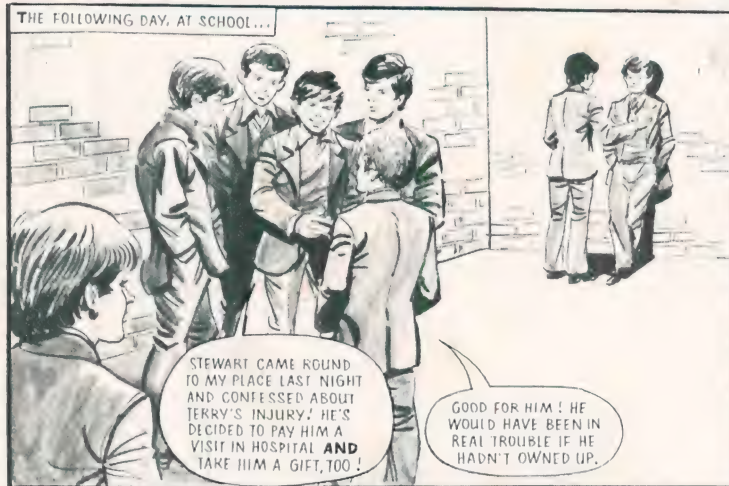
STEWART TURNER, BELIEVE IT OR NOT... IT WAS SO EASY, TOO!

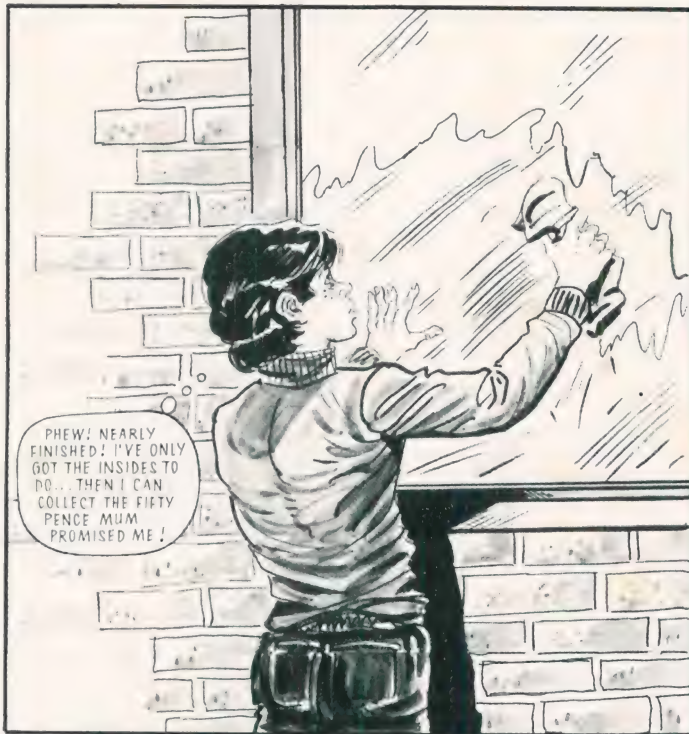


I SUPPOSE THAT'S THE REASON WHY HE'S NOT HERE, EH? A BIT CHOKED ABOUT GETTING THRASHED, I EXPECT!

THAT'S A POINT! WHERE IS OUR FRIEND MISTER TURNER? HE SHOULD BE HERE WITH THE REST OF US. WE'LL HAVE TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT WITH HIM TOMORROW!







PHEW! NEARLY FINISHED! I'VE ONLY GOT THE INSIDES TO DO... THEN I CAN COLLECT THE FIFTY PENCE MUM PROMISED ME!

WHEN MIKE HAD FINISHED, HE WENT OFF TO FIND HIS FATHER...



SO I NOTICED! ANYWAY, HAVE YOU CLEANED THE WINDOWS FOR MUM YET? REMEMBER THERE'S STILL THE FRONT AND BACK LAWNS TO TIDY UP! YOU'D BETTER BE QUICK BEFORE IT SNOWS AGAIN!

SOON MIKE HAD ONLY ONE MORE CHORE TO COMPLETE AT HIS GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE...



IT'S ABOUT TIME I GAVE YOU SOME EXTRA POCKET MONEY FOR DOING MY SHOPPING, MIKE. IT'S A PITY YOU CAN'T SPEND IT ON YOURSELF... YOU'RE ALWAYS HELPING ME OUT!

THANKS, GRAN. IT'S GOOD OF YOU TO HELP ME OUT! I'LL HAVE EARNED OVER A POUND WHEN I'VE FINISHED ALL MY JOBS!

WHILE MIKE WAS IN THE SUPERMARKET, WHO SHOULD HE BUMP INTO BUT STEWART TURNER!



JUST DOING THE WEEKLY SHOPPING FOR SOME OLD LADIES IN OUR STREET. THEY SAID THEY KNEW TERRY WAS COMING OUT OF HOSPITAL SHORTLY AND THEY WANTED TO CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING TOWARDS HIS PARTY!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, STEW?

THE NEXT DAY, FINAL PLANS FOR THE PARTY WERE BEING LAID...

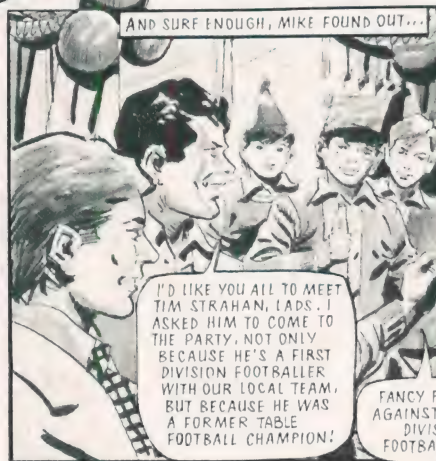
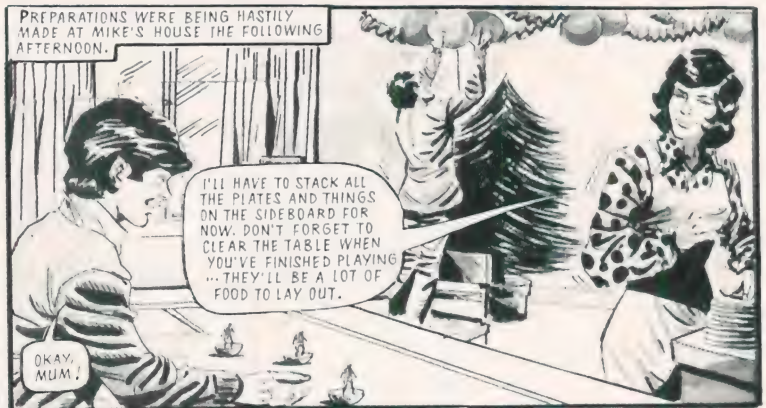


WELL, LADS, YOU MADE A TERRIFIC EFFORT. WE'VE COLLECTED A TOTAL OF NINETEEN POUNDS AND FIFTEEN PENCE. BOBBY KNOX AND MYSELF WILL BE BUYING THE FOOD TOMORROW.

THE PARTY'S AT MY HOUSE ON CHRISTMAS EVE...



... BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT MY FOLKS ARE UP TO. THEY DID MENTION SOMETHING ABOUT SETTING UP THE TABLE FOOTBALL GAME. THERE'S A SURPRISE GUEST COMING!



DURRELLS PALACE

DAN WAYNE BECAME PLAYER-MANAGER OF LOWLY DURRELLS PALACE IN THE WESTERN LEAGUE AND WORKED HARD TO IMPROVE THE TEAM AND THE GROUND ... BUT THERE WERE ALWAYS PROBLEMS. ONE DAY, DAN WAS OUT ON HIS USUAL EARLY MORNING TRAINING RUN ...

'MORNING, MISTER WAYNE! HAVE YOU SEEN THE NEWSPAPER? LOOKS LIKE YOUR TEAM'S IN TROUBLE AGAIN!

FIRST I'VE HEARD OF IT, MILKY. LET ME SEE THAT ...

THEY'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG! THE PLAYERS HAVEN'T BEEN DROPPED! THEY'RE ONLY PART-TIMERS AND THEY'VE BEEN SENT UP TO SCOTLAND FOR A WEEK BY THE FIRM THEY WORK FOR! THEY CAN'T PLAY!

WELL, THAT'S A BIT DIFFERENT, ISN'T IT ...

AT DURRELLS PALACE'S GROUND...

WE'VE ONLY GOT TWO RESERVES, BOSS! HOW DO WE REPLACE THREE MEN?

I'LL FIND SOMEONE, JOE...

SPORT
PLAYER PROBLEMS AT PALACE! KEY DEFENDERS DROPPED FROM SATURDAY'S MATCH!

THE PLAYERS WERE WORRIED, TOO...

WE WON'T HAVE TO POSTPONE SATURDAY'S MATCH, WILL WE, BOSS?

WE'LL HAVE A FULL TEAM OUT, LAD, DON'T WORRY!

THREE DEFENDERS MISSING IS GOING TO MAKE IT TOUGH FOR LARRY...

HE'LL COPE! HE'S A GOOD GOALIE... AND I'LL DROP BACK AND PLAY IN DEFENCE, TOO...



OKAY, THAT'S ENOUGH, LADS!
BE ON TIME TOMORROW...
AND IF WE ALL PUT OUR BACKS
INTO THE GAME, WE'LL WIN!

IT'LL BE
AMAZING
IF WE DO!



EVERYONE HAVE AN EARLY NIGHT...
AND DON'T GO CATCHING COLD, OR FALLING
DOWN THE STAIRS! IF ANYONE ELSE CAN'T
TURN OUT TOMORROW WE
WILL BE IN TROUBLE!

SEE YOU,
BOSS!

CHEERS...

DAN 'PHONED OTHER MANAGERS...



ANYONE, BOB... A DEFENDER
OR A STRIKER! I MUST FIND
SOMEONE...

SORRY!
NO ONE TO
SPARE
HERE, DAN.
I CAN'T
HELP
YOU...



NO ONE
AVAILABLE,
DAN...

SORRY...

OUR RESERVES ARE
PLAYING, DAN...



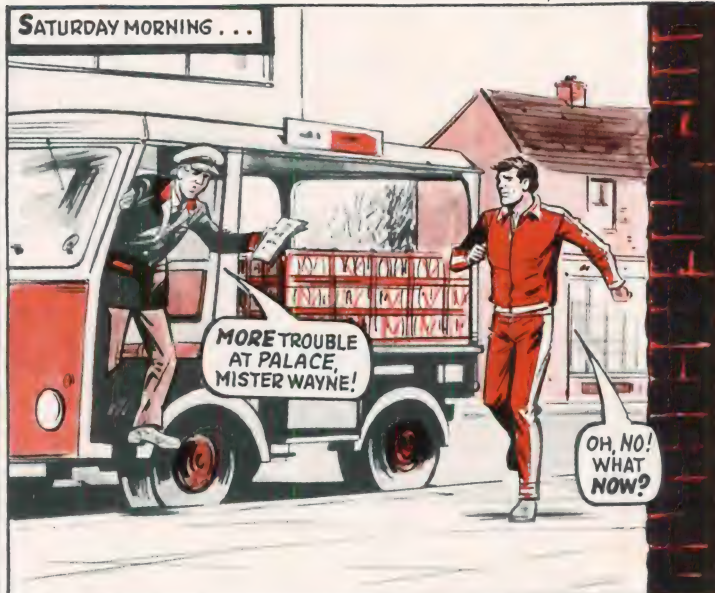
THE PRESS ARE HERE
BOSS! DO YOU WANT TO
SPEAK TO THEM?

NOT REALLY,
BUT I SUPPOSE
I'D BETTER...



WHY DID YOU DROP
THREE MEN, DAN?

I HEARD YOU'D TRANSFERRED
THEM TO A SCOTTISH TEAM!
IS THAT RIGHT?



THEN...



ON THE TERRACES THAT AFTERNOON...



IN THE DRESSING-ROOM...



IN SPITE OF THEIR RESERVE PLAYERS, PALACE PLAYED WELL...



JUST BEFORE HALF-TIME... THE BALL WENT TO MILKY MANN...





WAKE UP, MILKY!

OUCH! IT FEELS LIKE BEING HIT BY A TANK!



ARE YOU OKAY?

J-JUST ABOUT! ROUGH MATCH, ISN'T IT? NOT LIKE MY SCHOOL GAMES!

HALF-TIME CAME ... AND WENT ...



THERE CAN'T BE MORE THAN TWENTY MINUTES TO GO...

... IF WE CAN HOLD OUT... WE COULD GET A DRAW... WHICH WOULD BE A VERY GOOD RESULT FOR US!

BUT AS THE ATTACKS CONTINUED, PALACE BECAME DESPERATE ...



THAT'S IT... ANYWHERE WILL DO!

KEEP THEM OUT, LADS!

FIVE MINUTES LEFT!

MILKY CHASED THE BALL ... AND THE DEFENDERS CHASED MILKY!

SHOOT, MILKY!

MILKY WAS THE ONLY ONE UP ... TRYING TO KEEP OUT OF THE WAY!



GET AFTER IT, MILKY!

CHASE IT!

OH, CRUMBS! I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!

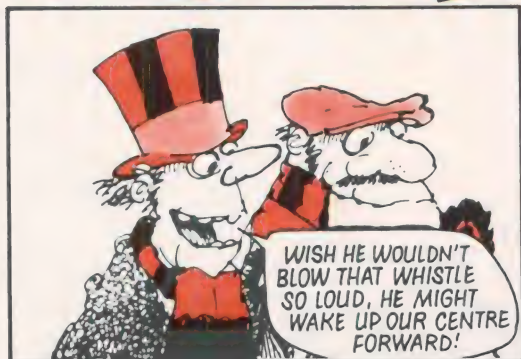


IF... IF THEY CATCH ME! THEY'LL KNOCK ME OVER AGAIN! I'M GETTING RID OF IT!



FAMOUS FOOTBALL FUNNIES!

KEN TAYLOR



WHO... WHAT AND

Who are they? What are they doing? Where is it all happening? Presented here are four pages of popular personalities in familiar and not so familiar settings. They create fun, excitement, relaxation and even nostalgia in ten pictures which Roy has chosen. They are a marvellous and memorable scrapbook all on their own!



"Listen, darling... this is how you say it." England striker, Tony Woodcock, pictured outside Cologne Cathedral in West Germany with his wife, Carole. They're trying to translate English into German. I wish I knew the German for, good luck!



"Hey! This is not rugby, old boy!" On the deck are Ipswich Town's Eric Gates (left) and Neale Cooper of Aberdeen.



WHERE?



Sending a postcard home is Leighton James. He's at Stanstead Airport in Essex, en route for a vital World Cup qualifying game versus Russia in Tbilisi. That's a long way from home!



Anyone for tee? Ossie Ardiles' skills are sometimes unbelievable, but is this a fair way to treat team-mate, Paul Miller? Obviously he isn't worried about being driven mad!





Bob Willis? Dennis Lillee? I don't believe it! It's Gary Shaw! Aston Villa were bowled over by his sudden change of sport. It creased me! He's given his opponents the slip! Bye! Bye!

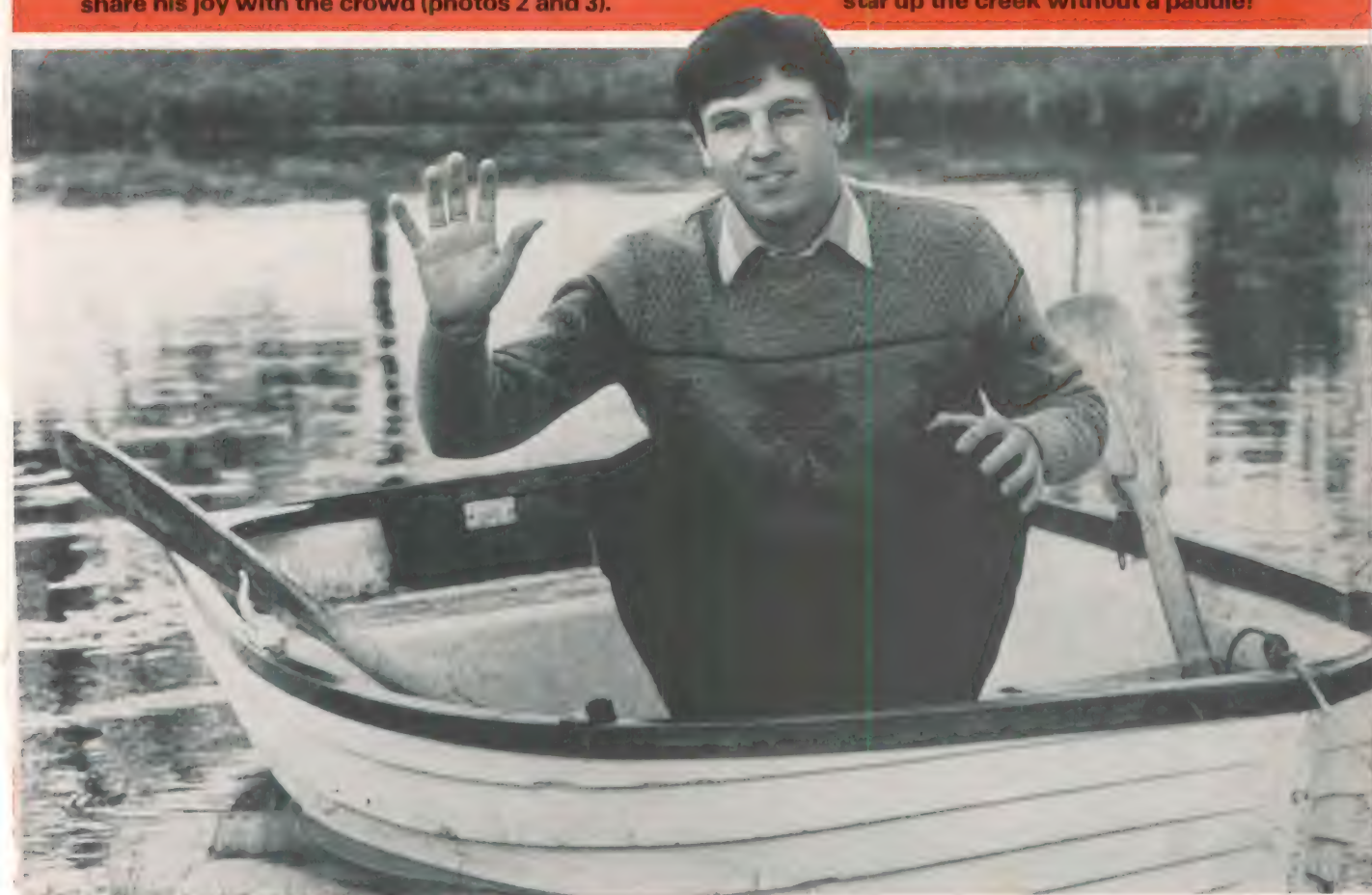


One, two O'Leary! No blarney this time! David of Arsenal and Eire has just witnessed his own match of the day! He's married Joy, so it's a time for joy in the new O'Leary home.

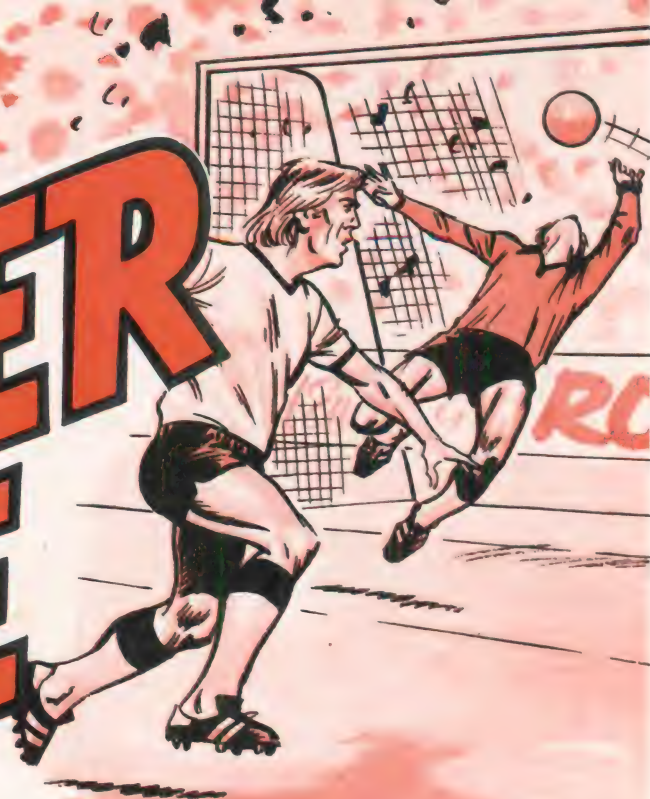


Mariner's on the mark! Ipswich Town's Paul Mariner chalks up a goal (first picture above). It's his first after a spell of injury and he can't wait to share his joy with the crowd (photos 2 and 3).

The river of no return! Why not? West Ham and England star, Alvin Martin is heading for the top! You won't find this Hammers' star up the creek without a paddle!



ROY'S WONDER CURLE



Taffy Morgan, Melchester Rovers' trainer, uttered a despairing groan.

"Only five minutes left," he muttered to Steve Naylor the substitute sitting beside him in the dugout. "Roy's leaving it too late."

"You can't blame Roy," retorted Steve. "He's driving the lads as hard as he can, but these South Americans are even better than we bargained for. We guessed that they'd go for a draw, and that we'd have to play an attacking game, but so far they've had an answer to every move we've made."

Rovers, having won the European Cup, were playing the first game in a two-leg challenge match against Casadoro, the champions of South America, to be followed by a second game in Casadoro's stadium.

"Roy got it right when he figured they'd concentrate on stopping us from scoring in this leg," Steve went on.

"Hang about!" Taffy interrupted. "This could be it."

Blackie Gray was coming through with the ball. Roy, who had been tightly marked all through the game, was moving as if to outrun the defenders so that Blackie could lay the ball ahead of him.

The shadowing defenders moved quickly to intercept the intended pass. Their goalie, on his toes, shifted position rapidly to deal with the threatened shot.

"They've got us sewn up," groaned Taffy.

Blackie was looking towards his skipper, but he squared the ball to his right, where Noel Baxter was

pounding through from behind. The goalie, cat-like, shifted position to meet the new threat. Roy, the pressure momentarily off, started to run wide.

Noel raised his head as if measuring how many strides Roy would take to reach open space.

The goalie yelled a warning to the men in front of him and braced himself to run out and throw himself at the ball if it came to Roy's feet.

Noel surprised them by lofting the ball high above the players jostling in the box, sending it towards the corner flag.

"What good is that?" groaned Taffy.

He soon got his answer.

Vernon Eliot, who had appeared to be taking no part in the move, and had been attracting no attention, came zooming in from nowhere.

He had no time to kill the bounce. He had to hit the ball on the run, but it was the kind of shot from an impossible angle that Vernon had made his speciality.

The goalie was caught wrong-footed. He made a gallant effort at full stretch, but it wasn't good enough. The ball swished past his reaching fingers into the net, to put Rovers one up.

DESPERATE

The stadium boiled over with excitement and the remaining minutes were played out to the accompaniment of a din from roaring fans that could be heard all over Melchester. The South Americans threw everything into a desperate effort to get back on level terms, but the Rovers played it tight and



Vernon hit the ball on the run. The goalie made a gallant effort, but it wasn't good enough. Rovers were one up!

Charlie Carter, in goal, was scarcely troubled before the final whistle blew.

Blackie trotted up beside Roy as they made for the tunnel.

"Is one going to be enough?" he asked.

"It gives us a fighting chance," Roy said. "But we're going to have to think up some new tricks for the second leg."

When they reached the dressing-room Ben Galloway, Rovers' general manager, was waiting for Roy.

"My chauffeur will have the car here in half-an-hour," said Ben. "Can you be ready?"

"Sure," nodded Roy. "When I've showered give me a few minutes to 'phone Penny. I've bought the twins a dog. He seems a bit sick and the kids are fretting. I want to check that Penny isn't having any problems."

Roy and Ben were going to have a look at a young player who had been recommended by one of the club's talent scouts.

When Roy joined Ben at the car, after telephoning his wife, he was frowning.

"Anything wrong?" asked Ben.

"The dog's no better. I've told Penny to call the vet," Roy answered as he got into the car.

The trip to London turned out to be a waste of time. The young player was as promising as the scout had reported, and was thrilled when he learned that he had attracted the attention of Melchester Rovers, but he didn't want to leave home.

As soon as Roy got home, the next evening, and put his key in the lock, he heard excited barking. He

opened the door. The dog came streaking out of the living room to greet him. It took a flying leap, hit Roy on the chest, bounced off, tumbled to the floor, tried a second time and managed to lick Roy's face as Roy caught him in his arms.

Penny and the twins came out, smiling.

"What a welcome," gasped Roy. "The dog has made a remarkable recovery. The vet must be mighty good at his job. He'll probably send in a whacking bill, but it'll be worth it."

"Wrong," smiled Penny. "The vet said there was no need for expensive treatment. In fact, no need to do anything. Let nature take its course, he said, and in a day or two he'll get better of his own accord. And he was right."

"Great," said Roy. "It would have been an extra worry if I'd had to fly off to Casadoro leaving you to cope with a sick dog."

"Lucky you. In a couple of days you'll be living it up in glamorous South America while the twins and I are pushing a trolley round the supermarket."

ORDEAL

Penny spoke with a teasing smile, but she knew that this was no pleasure trip for Roy.

It promised to be the most nerve-testing ordeal the Rovers had ever faced. They were going into the match as the representatives of Europe. They would be watched on TV by hundreds of millions of fans all over the world. It wasn't just their Melchester supporters who would be looking for victory, but

countless followers of the game all over the continent.

"I've packed your travelling bag," Penny went on, "and put in a pair of swimming trunks. Your hotel is bound to have a pool."

"Two — actually," grinned Roy. "The South Americans are going flat out on hospitality. Coping with it could be more exhausting than the actual match."

Although Roy managed to appear to be treating the game in a matter-of-fact way, as just another match, he couldn't help letting the tremendous excitement of the occasion get through to him. He knew that it was the same for the rest of the squad and that it would be an important part of his job as player/manager to set a good example in keeping calm.

Two days later, when the Rovers party of players and officials left Melchester, their fans gave them a noisy send-off, but it was nothing to the welcome that awaited them in Casadoro.

They came off the 'plane to face a battery of cameras backed by the thunderous greeting of thousands of fans, who were being kept at a distance with difficulty by a cordon of armed police.

By the time Roy and his team stepped on to the tarmac they were outnumbered and hemmed in by a swarm of plain clothes bodyguards who kept close to them on their way to a special coach with bullet-proof windows. They soon sped off, escorted by police motor-cyclists and patrol cars with sirens shrieking, through streets lined with spectators to their hotel.

Even seasoned travellers like Blackie Gray, Nat Gosden and Paco Diaz, who were used to such treatment, found the reception mind-blowing.

Roy hoped that when they reached their hotel they would be allowed to relax, but they weren't able to forget that they were very special guests. The staff fussed round them, helping with the luggage, eager to serve, hovering respectfully.

A pile of invitations was awaiting Ben, offering the party non-stop entertainment.

He handed them all to the hotel manager.

"I'd like to hire your secretary," he said. "Answer all these, but refuse them, politely. Explain that my lads will be relaxing quietly and going to bed early until after the match."

"It shall be done at once, senor," beamed the hotel manager. "Dinner will be ready whenever you wish. The chef has excelled himself in your honour."

The waiters were all equipped with special menus as big as wall charts. They were written in Portuguese and the waiters had to translate them. They began to look more and more glum as player after player chose small helpings of the plainest food. No one had any appetite. They were all feeling too tense.

A waiter bent over to Roy and pointed to one of the items.

"That, senor," he said, "is our chef's speciality. He is very proud of it. I recommend it."

"What is it?" asked Roy.

"Baby octopus, soaked for ten hours in a local

wine and —"

Roy was on the point of refusing, then he saw the sad expression on the waiter's face, and relented.

"Sounds marvellous," he agreed.

Mervyn Wallace, sitting next to Roy, murmured under his breath. "They should give you a medal. But if you're game, I am." He turned to the waiter. "Bring me some, too," he said bravely.

As soon as the meal was over the players started to drift off to their separate rooms.

Roy switched on the television and found himself watching a very old film with dubbed voices speaking the dialogue in Portuguese.

Jet-lag started to overtake him and he decided to go to bed.

He was wakened by a white-coated figure bearing a tray, gliding across the dim, luxurious bedroom.

Roy lifted his head painfully from the pillow.

"Who are you?" he croaked.

"Manuel, senor, appointed by the hotel as your personal valet. I bring you coffee. It is a beautiful morning. I will open the curtains."

The curtains parted with a faint swish, but to Roy it sounded like a runaway lorry-load of scrap iron falling into a stone quarry.

As soon as Manuel had gone Roy drank strong black coffee and made for the bathroom to put his head under the cold shower.

When he got down to the breakfast room he found Blackie, looking glum.

"*Heard the news?*" asked Blackie. "*Mervyn has been taken ill. The doctor's with him now.*"

"Powerful stuff," claimed Nat. "I've given Mervyn his first dose."



"Good grief!" groaned Roy. "That's all we need."

"You don't look too bright yourself," Blackie said, giving Roy a sharp glance.

"I feel," said Roy, "as if I'm going around carrying a symphony orchestra between my ears, playing the Anvil Chorus, very loud — with real sledgehammers!"

"Oh, no! You'd better report sick right away."

"No," insisted Roy. "I'm saying nothing and you're not to, either. If the lads get the idea that two of us might be out of the side it'll shatter their confidence."

Ben had joined them by the time the club doctor came down from making his examination.

"No need to worry. I'll have Mervyn fit in time for the game," he said. "I've started him on a course of treatment. A new wonder drug. It can't fail. Lucky I had a supply of tablets with me."

The doctor disappeared, whistling.

Roy glanced up and saw Taffy approaching, accompanied by his physiotherapist, who was carrying something that looked like a rivet gun with a disc of sponge rubber on the end.

"I heard that," Taffy said disgustedly. "Doctors! All they think about is pills, tablets, drugs. Poisonous rubbish, all of them! Massage, that's the thing. Now we've been working on this vibra-massage which relieves pain, gets the blood circulating, eases tension and tones up the muscles."

Ben glanced questioningly at Roy.

"We can't afford to neglect any sort of treatment that may get Mervyn fit," Ben muttered.

"If it does no good, at least it can't do any harm,"

Roy pointed out.

"All right, Taffy. See what you can do," Ben agreed. "But you'd better not let the doctor know. He might take umbrage."

"You won't regret this, Ben," Taffy promised as the pair turned to go.

Nat Gosden, the Rovers veteran defender, known to everyone as 'Grandad', came in clutching a battered old tin box.

"You needn't worry about Mervyn," he said. "I've fixed him up with this. My family have sworn by it for generations. The formula has been handed down from my great grandmother."

"Now wait a minute —" Roy tried to interrupt.

"What did people do before the days when chemicals were concocted in laboratories?" demanded Nat. "They went out into their gardens, the fields, woods and hedgerows for remedies provided by nature."

Roy took the tin and sniffed at the contents which looked like grey and dusty tea.

"What's in it?" he asked suspiciously.

"Dried cow parsley, dead nettle, toadflax, ragwort, stuff like that. You brew into a herb tea and drink it piping hot. It gets rid of all the poison in the system. Purifies the blood, stimulates the glands."

"It smells horrible," said Roy, giving the tin a cautious sniff.

TERRIBLE

"Powerful stuff," claimed Nat. "Better than all your pills and doctor's rubbish. I've given Mervyn his first dose. He'll have another every two hours until he's better. I'll have him as fit as a fiddle by kick-off time."

Roy and Ben went up to Mervyn's room. He was lying in bed groaning.

"I feel terrible," he moaned. "I've had the doctor's pills, I've been pummelled all over with Taffy's gadget and I've swallowed Nat's awful muck, but none of it seems to do any good."

There was a polite knock on the door. Manuel came in, accompanied by another young man carrying a bag.

"This is my brother, senior Wallace," said Manuel. "He is a genius at curing sick people. He is the greatest specialist in his field in this city."

"What sort of a specialist?" frowned Roy.

"He is an acupuncturist," said Manuel proudly.

"An acupuncturist?" exclaimed Blackie. "You mean that Chinese-type witchcraft, where they stick pins in people?"

"It is not witchcraft," protested Manuel's brother mildly. "It is a highly scientific treatment and it works."

"All right," groaned Mervyn. "Nothing's worked so far. It can't do any harm trying. Go ahead."

Roy and Blackie went out and left him to it.

"What worries me," said Blackie, "is what happens if any more of the lads go down with whatever is affecting you and Mervyn?"



"I don't think they will," Roy answered. "We were the only two who risked that Octopus concoction at dinner. I'm not blaming the chef. I guess it was just too rich and indigestible for us, not being used to it."

"In that case, why don't you get something from the doctor?" demanded Blackie.

"I don't want to make a fuss and upset the lads any more than they already are," Roy said. "Besides, I'm already following advice regarding my treatment. I got it from a vet."

"A vet! An animal doctor?" gasped Blackie.

"Why not? He cured my dog," said Roy.

Roy spent a quiet day and by evening he was feeling much better. The news from the sick room was that Mervyn also seemed to be on the mend.

On the morning of the match Manuel entered Roy's room to find him standing at the open window, taking in deep breaths of air.

"You wish to order breakfast, senor?" asked Manuel.

At previous meals Roy had had only a small appetite and Manuel was expecting him to ask for toast and marmalade.

"Yes," said Roy. "I'll start with orange juice and a plate of porridge, followed by a poached egg on fried bread, with a slice of bacon, two sausages, some tomatoes, and mushrooms."

"I will tell the chef," grinned Manuel, scribbling on a note pad, and turning to go.

"I haven't finished yet," said Roy. "I'll follow that with a nice juicy kipper, done in butter, and finish off with a chunk of melon."

ATTACK

Roy was tucking in to his breakfast when Blackie arrived. "You're back in form," grinned Blackie. "I guess Mervyn is, too. I've just seen him diving into the swimming pool — off the top board."

"I knew it," nodded Roy. "Now we're all set to give Casadoro a run for their money. Of course they'll plan this leg quite differently from the one at Melchester. They've got to attack. We must expect them to throw everything at us and they'll have the advantage of a packed stadium of their own fans to inspire them. It's going to be tough."

Roy was proved right.

From the kick-off they played a furiously aggressive game. It took every ounce of stamina and stubbornness that the Rovers could produce. But Noel Baxter and Duncan McKay, with Vic Guthrie and Nat Gosden in support, quashed attack after attack and when the South Americans did hammer their way into a position to give them a scoring chance, Charlie Carter was there to perform acrobatics to keep the ball out of the net.

At half-time there was no score.

"They aren't going to be able to keep this up for another forty-five minutes," Roy told the Rovers in the dressing-room. "At some point they're going to have to take a breather, to get their second wind. That's when we hit back."

FIGHTING

Casadoro opened the second-half with even more desperation than before.

Then came the moment when Roy sensed that the pace was slackening; that their opponents had run themselves into the ground.

The Melchester player/manager flung his arm high in the air as a signal to the Rovers to come out fighting.

Casadoro suddenly found themselves being run off their aching legs.

Mervyn made a zig-zagging run and dropped a high ball into the goalmouth. Roy dashed to get under it. He met it with his head and steered it out of the goalie's reach into the top corner of the net.

The tired South Americans, instead of drawing level, now found themselves trailing by two goals.

Before they had time to recover from the shock Roy slammed in another of his rockets, this time low down. It beat the diving goalie, but hit a post. Blackie dashed in to meet the rebound and drove it into the net with the goalie still flat on the ground.

The game was as good as over. The South Americans played out the rest of it struggling to prevent the storming Rovers from scoring again.

The final whistle blew and Roy led his team off in triumph.

A big reception had been planned after the match. When Roy arrived he found Ben waiting for him, looking distracted.

"There's a terrible row going on!" gasped Ben. "Instead of this being a celebration it looks like ending in a free fight!"

He indicated a side room from which came the sound of angry voices raised in a shouting match.

Roy went in. The doctor, Taffy, Nat and Manuel were yelling at each other.

"You're a bunch of quacks," the doctor was yelling. "It was my treatment that got Mervyn fit."

"If it wasn't for my great-granny's herb tea he'd still be in bed now," jeered Nat.

"You're both wrong. It was our vibra-massage," shouted Taffy.

"You know nothing, any of you," yelled Manuel. "It was my brother's acupuncture!"

"Cool it!" cried Roy. "Listen to me. You're all wrong. I know. I had the same thing wrong with me, but I got better as quickly as Mervyn did and I didn't have any of your treatment. I took my vet's advice."

They all stared at him. The doctor looked shocked.

"A vet?" he echoed.

"He cured my dog by leaving it alone and letting nature take its course. None of you worked any sort of wonder cure on Mervyn. He'd have got better anyway, just as I did," Roy added.

"Now that's settled, let's all go in and enjoy the party."

THE END



ROY'S QUIZ LEAGUE!

Hi, pals, and welcome to my latest Annual Quiz. If you follow the regular Quiz Leagues in my weekly paper, you'll find the point-scoring system is exactly the same. You score one goal for each correct answer (and if there's more than one part to the question, every part must be correct). There are ten questions, so the maximum number of goals you can score is ten. Off you go and the very best of luck!

1.

1. A superb split-second shot captures Manchester City's Kevin Reeves in airborne action against Tottenham's Gary Brooke. The match was the 1981 F.A. Cup Final, which was decided by a replay. What was the result of the first match, name the scorers for both sides, and also the player whom Gary Brooke substituted?



2.

2. Here's a superb, action shot of Arthur Antunes Coimbra of Brazil. By what name is he better known as?



4. Pictured on the right is winger Alan Birch. Alan joined the Wolves in 1981. Can you name the team he signed for in 1982?

3.

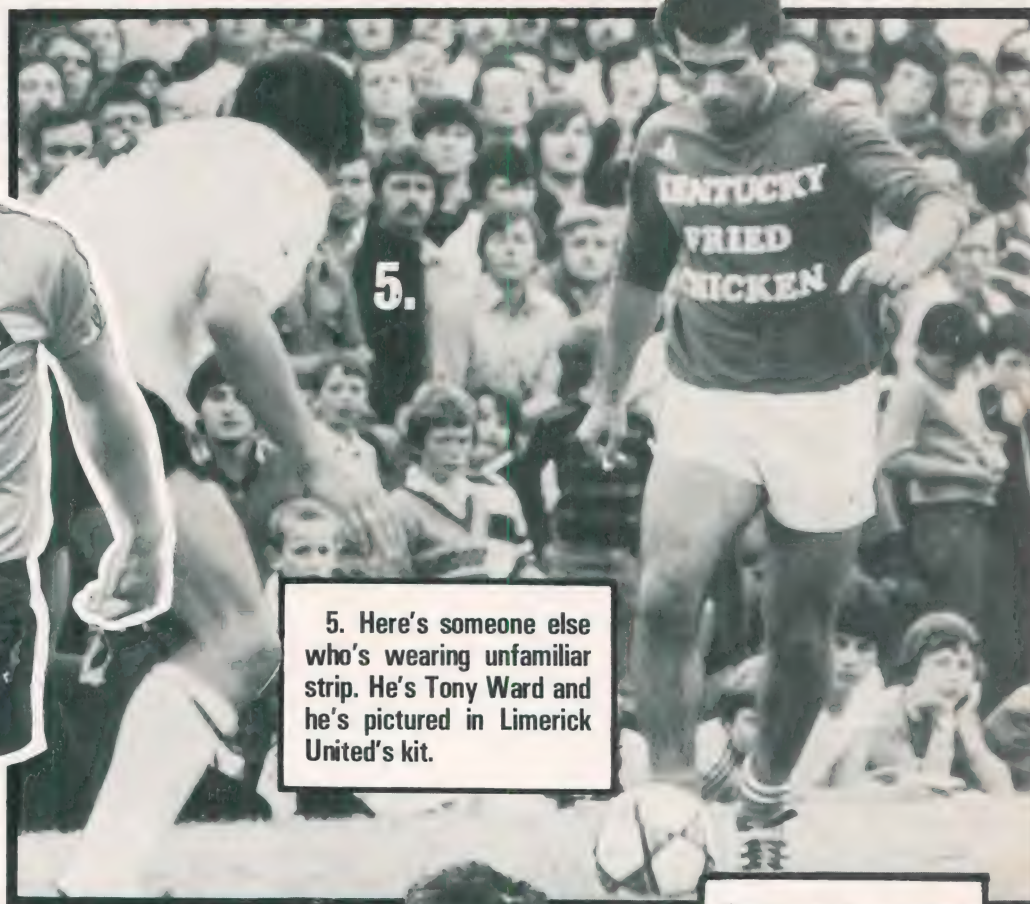
3. A proud moment for Trevor Brooking, his wife and children, following his investiture at Buckingham Palace. Trevor received the M.B.E. for his services to football. What does M.B.E. stand for?



4.



5.



5. Here's someone else who's wearing unfamiliar strip. He's Tony Ward and he's pictured in Limerick United's kit.

6.



Can you tell me what sport he is more famous for, having represented his country many times?

6. Spain's Gerado (left) and Carlos Manuel of Portugal meet head on during a match in Barcelona. Spain qualified for the 1982 World Cup Finals, because they were the host nation, but Portugal were in a group with Northern Ireland, Scotland, Israel and one other country. Can you name the missing country? Here's a clue...was it Norway, Denmark or Sweden?

7. Big Victory celebrations, this time after Aberdeen had knocked out the U.E.F.A. Cup holders in the First Round of the competition. Can you name the club they beat in the 1981-82 tournament?



8.

8. Great whoops of joy by this young man, following his goal for the England Youth team. Can you identify him and tell me the name of his League club?



9.

9. Luther Blissett's a Malcolm Poskett supporter! Here, the Watford duo have a bit of fun during a pre-season photocall. To score a goal, can you name the Hertfordshire club's ground?

10.

10. Comedian Jasper Carrott is not only one of Birmingham City's greatest fans, but he is also a Director of the club too. Here, he celebrates City's promotion from Division Two. Can you tell me in which season the Blues returned to the First Division? Was it 1979-80, 1980-81 or 1981-82?

**SCORE ONE GOAL FOR
EACH QUESTION YOU
ANSWER CORRECTLY**

1. One-one; Tommy Hutchison scored both, including an own goal; Ricky Villa. 2. Zico. 3. Member Of The British Empire. 4. Barnsley. 5. Tony plays rugby for Ireland. 6. Sweden. 7. Ipswich Town. 8. Paul Allen of West Ham United. 9. Vicarage Road. 10. 1979-80.

PROFILE...

Here are the players who took the Second Division by storm last season. Now's your opportunity to meet the Men of Melchester Rovers!



ROY RACE. Player-Manager and legendary folk-hero of Melchester. Roy made his debut for his one and only club in 1954-55 and since then has become associated with all that is best in the game. A former England international, he even took over as caretaker England Manager in 1978. Famous throughout the world for his stunning left foot shot, known as 'Roy's Rocket'!



BLACKIE GRAY. Roy's boyhood pal. Blackie, like his Player-Manager, has grown up with Melchester and he also made his debut in 1954-55. Formerly a striker, he once formed a deadly spearhead with Roy, but now he operates in midfield.



CHARLIE CARTER. Known as 'The Cat'. First choice 'keeper for Melchester, but the form of Ray Clemence and Peter Shilton has kept him out of the England team. He's still hoping!

VIC GUTHRIE. Fiery centre-half who was signed for a bargain £20,000 from Second Division Westbury Town in 1979. Vic is a current Welsh international.



JIMMY SLADE. At home in midfield or in the back-four, Jimmy is one of the club's outstanding prospects. To date, he has won several England Under-21 caps.



NAT GOSDEN. An ex-international who was signed for his undoubted experience at the end of 1980 from Oldfield. Known affectionately by the fans as 'Grandad'.



MELCHESTER ROVERS



NOEL BAXTER (left) is Rovers' long-standing right-back. Also known for his sense of humour!



PACO DIAZ. Spanish international striker whose greatest asset is his superb close control. Paco was signed from Spanish First Division side Real Zaragosa.



MERVYN WALLACE. Once a goalscoring striker, Mervyn has been converted to midfield and has been a great success. A very determined tackler.



DUNCAN McKAY (right) is a Scottish international left-back, whose tough tackling is a feature of his play. Formerly with Portdean.



VERNON ELIOT (left) has been with the Rovers for over ten years. A West Indian by birth, Vernon can operate on either wing.



KENNY LOGAN. A wonderful prospect, who joined the club as an apprentice striker in 1981. Kenny is tipped for full Scottish honours.



MARK PRICE.



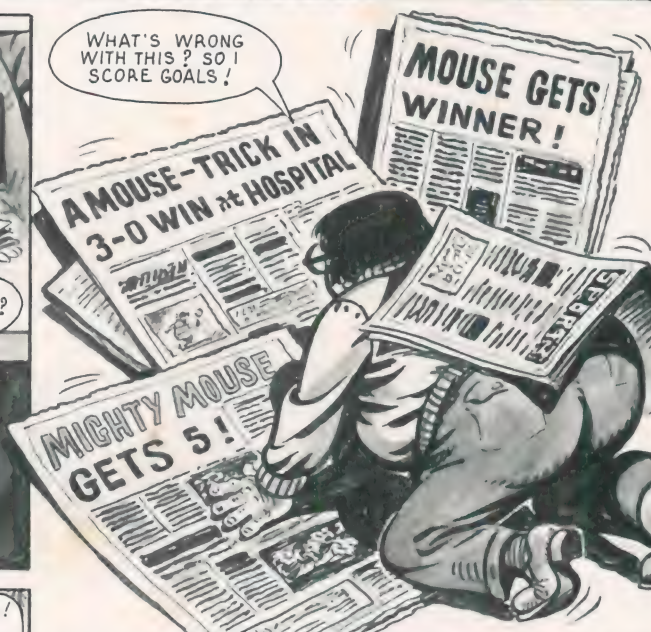
STEVE NAYLOR.



ALAN LYNCH.

Youth team players who have made the grade. Steve Naylor regularly plays in defence.

MIGHTY MOUSE!



WHEN THE ST. VICTOR'S TEAM
HEARD THE TOTTENFORD
MANAGER WAS COMING...



THE TOTTENFORD
MANAGER'S COMING
TO WATCH **US** PLAY?

WE'LL BE
DISCOVERED!

FANCY! A
MANAGER
FROM THE FIRST
DIVISION!

WE COULD
BECOME SOCCER-
STARS... **OVER-**
NIGHT!

WE'D EARN
HUNDREDS
OF POUNDS **AND**
BE ON THE
TELEVISION!



HE'S COMING
TO SEE **ME** PLAY
... NOT **YOU!**

WE COULD BE SPOTTED
BY A TALENT SCOUT JUST
THE SAME! **YOU**
DON'T KNOW!



NEXT MORNING...

DAFT LOT! THEY'RE
GETTING INTO TRAINING
FOR THEIR NEXT MATCH.
THEY THINK THEY'LL
IMPRESS THE TOTTEN-
FORD MANAGER...



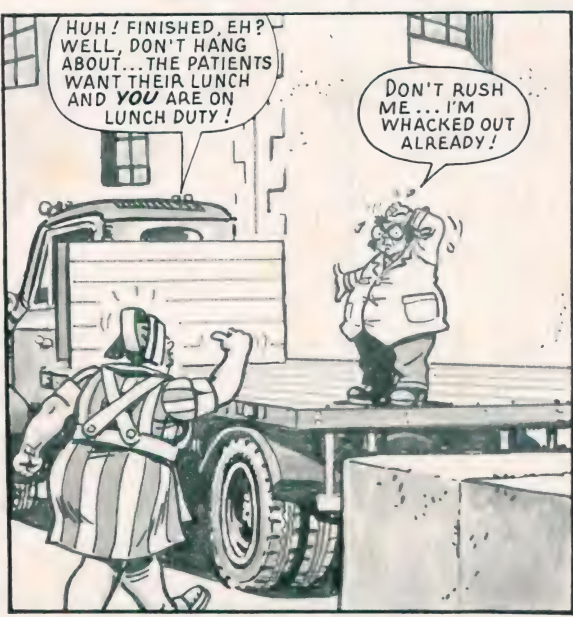
MOUSE WENT ABOUT HIS HOSPITAL DUTIES...

YOU ARE ON STORES DUTY
THIS MORNING, MOUSE. THAT
MEANS **UNLOADING** STORES!
GET TO IT, YOU LAZY LUMP!

IT'S A
PLEASURE
WORKING
WITH YOU,
MATRON!

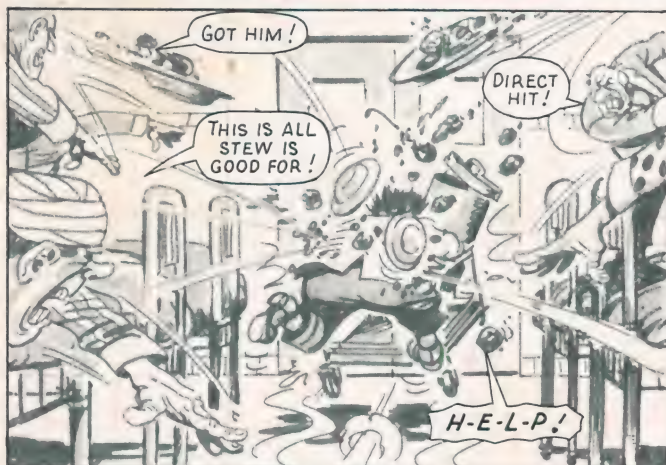


THEY'RE
STILL
AT IT...



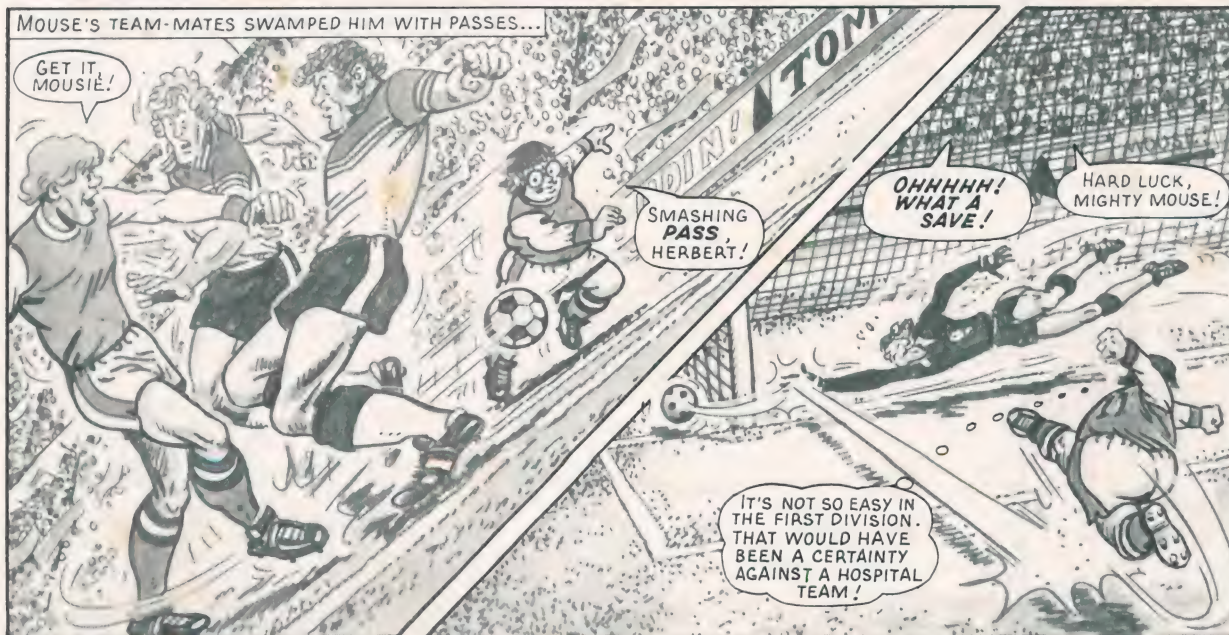
HUH! FINISHED, EH?
WELL, DON'T HANG
ABOUT... THE PATIENTS
WANT THEIR LUNCH
AND **YOU** ARE ON
LUNCH DUTY!

DON'T RUSH
ME... I'M
WHACKED OUT
ALREADY!





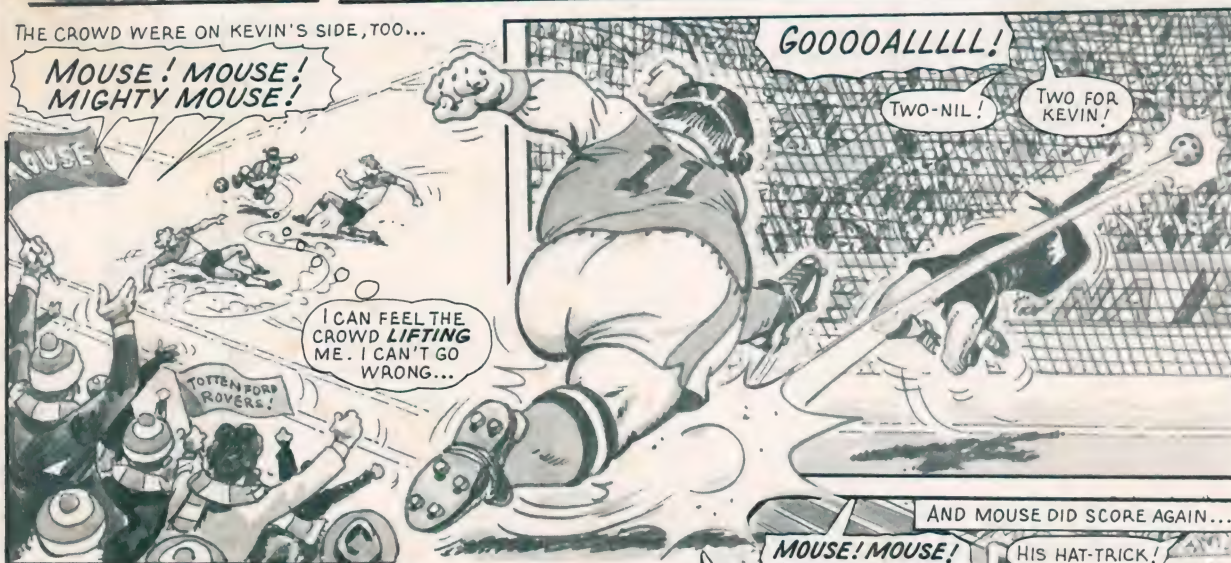
AT TOTTENFORD ROVERS' GROUND ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON...



MORE AND MORE PASSES CAME TO MOUSE...



THE CROWD WERE ON KEVIN'S SIDE, TOO...





GOAL!

PROVINCIAL
SEMIRNOF
CYPRUS GOES. THE



One of the great goals of 1981...or any year! It's a classic study in photography, action and excitement. Add to those ingredients a super setting like Wembley and you have it all! From a right-wing cross, Tommy Hutchison (on the ground) heads home a magnificent effort that even the great Denis Law would have been proud of! This goal put Manchester City one-up versus Tottenham in the F.A. Cup Final. No player or fan will ever forget Tommy's terrific goal!



ROY OF THE ROVERS

ANNUAL **1983**



TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR FOOTBALL!